TESTS: Kawasaki KZ1000R Eddie Lawson Replica, KX125, Suzuki RM125, Yamaha XS400 Maxim, Kawasaki GPz550

CYCLE GUIDE

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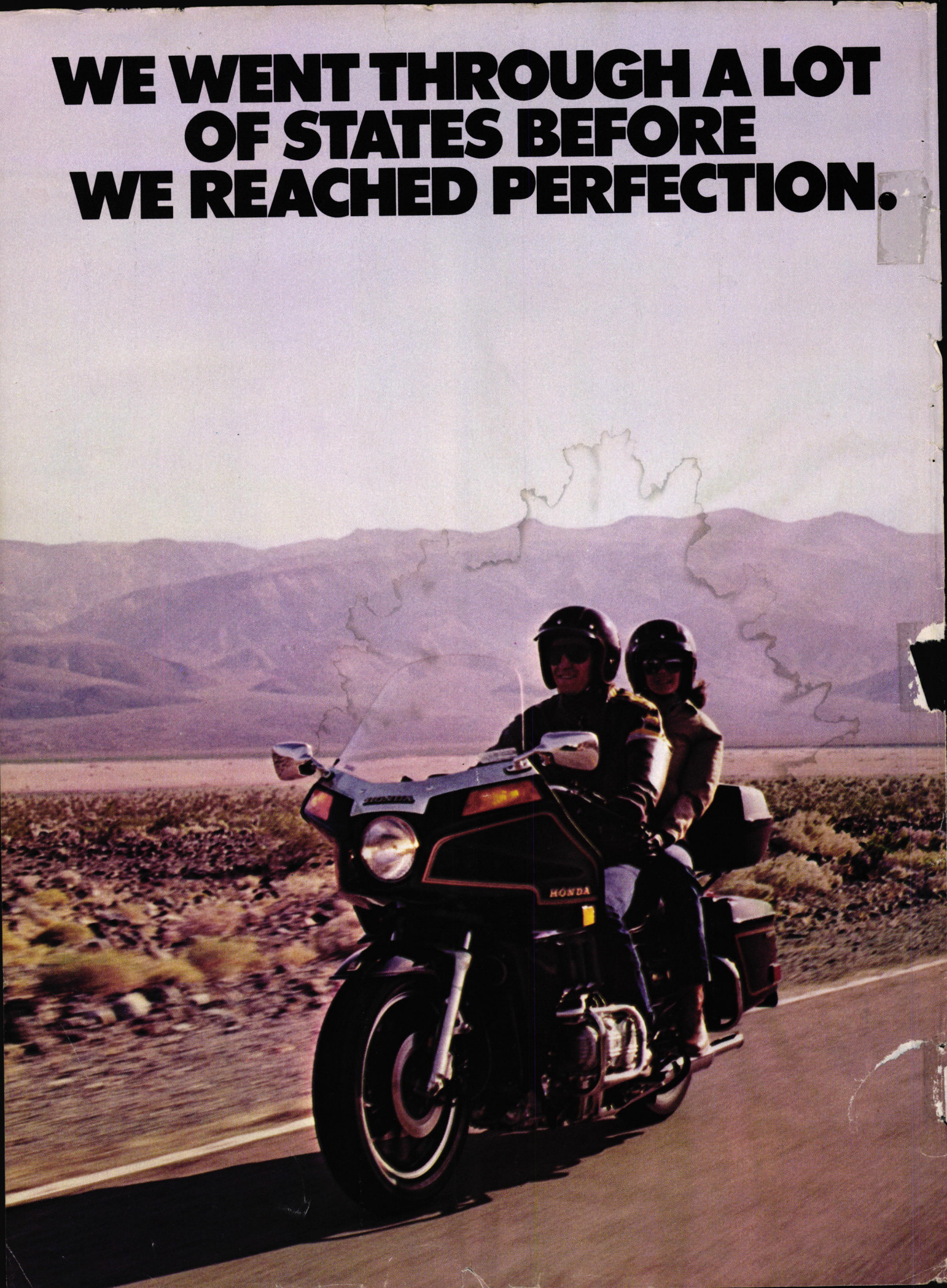

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OFF-ROAD

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	TYPE	ENGINE TYPE	WHEEL TRAVEL, IN. FRONT/REAR	WEIGHT, LBS	RAKE/TRAIL, DEGREES/INCHES	GEARS
Can-Am 125 Qualifier IV-'82	March '82	Enduro	Two-stroke	9.3/9.5	221	NA	6
Honda CR250R-'82	May '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.4/12.0	228	27.5/4.3	5
Honda CR480R-'82	April '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.5/12.0	232	27.2/4.2	4
Honda XR250R-'82	December '81	Enduro	Four-stroke	9.5/10.5	274	NA	5
Honda XR500R-'82	November '81	Enduro	Four-stroke	9.5/10.0	289	28.0/4.4	5
Husqvarna 250WR-'82	June '82	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.6/10.7	236	30.0/6.0	6
Husqvarna 430CR-'82	July '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.0	232	30.5/6.0	6
Husqvarna 500CR-'82	October '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.0	239	30.5/6.0	4
Italjet 350T-'82	December '81	Trials	Two-stroke	6.8/5.3	218	NA	6
Kawasaki KDX175-'82	September '82	Enduro	Two-stroke	9.6/10.5	227	28.0/4.7	6
Kawasaki KX125-'82	November '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.2/11.4	200	28.0/4.8	6
Kawasaki KX250-'82	May '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.2/11.3	220	30.0/5.1	5
KTM 495 MC-'82	July '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.3/12.1	247	27.5/4.8	5
Maico Alpha 1 490-'82	July '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.6/11.5	246	28.5/5.0	5
Suzuki DR500-'82	November '81	Trail	Four-stroke	8.6/8.2	290	NA	5
Suzuki PE175-'82	September '82	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.0/9.8	229	28.0/4.4	6
Suzuki RM125-'82	November '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.2/12.6	197	29.5/4.8	6
Suzuki RM250-'82	May '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	10.6/12.3	217	29.3/4.8	5
Suzuki RM465-'82	April '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	10.8/12.0	234	29.3/4.8	4
Yamaha IT175-'82	August '82	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.2/11.2	216	28.5/4.9	6
Yamaha YZ250-'82	May '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.0/11.0	235	27.5/4.7	5
Yamaha YZ490-'82	April '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.3/12.8	238	28.5/4.7	4

STREET

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	ENGINE TYPE*	DISPLACEMENT, CC	QUARTER-MILE, SEC./MPH	TOP SPEED, MPH	WEIGHT, LBS	FUEL CONSUMPTION, MPG	STOPPING DISTANCE FROM 60 MPH, FT.
BMW R65 LS-'82	April '82	2C/G	649.6	14.15/92.4	110	417	35-50	138
BMW R80 G/S-'81	November '81	2C/G	797.5	14.07/92.3	105	405	36-54	NA
BMW R100RS-'81	May '81	2C/G	979.9	13.48/98.4	127	492	34-52	145
BMW R100RT-'82	May '82	2C/G	979.9	13.86/95.1	122	523	35-50	148
H-D FLH Classic-'82	August '82	45-deg. 2D/F	1338.6	15.47/82.0	101	752	32-42	180
H-D FXRS-'82	December '81	45-deg. 2D/F	1338.6	13.92/93.1	109	594	40-47	124
Honda CBX400F-'82	October '82	4A/F	399.1	13.59/96.5	110	402	34-58	128
Honda CB750F-'81	June '81	4A/F	748.7	12.40/108.3	118	526	38-53	126
Honda CB900F-'81	July '81	4A/F	901.8	12.21/111.1	141	547	41-47	130
Honda CB1100R-'81	November '81	4A/F	1062.1	NA	155	518	31-48	NA
Honda CBX-'81	May '81	6A/F	1046.9	12.01/113.9	136	646	23-40	130
Honda CX500 Turbo-'81	September '81	80-deg. 2E/G	496.9	NA	136	549	NA	NA
Honda FT500 Ascot-'82	August '82	1B/F	497.7	14.92/83.7	97	360	47-54	146
Honda GL500 Interstate-'81	August '81	80-deg. 2E/G	496.9	14.88/86.4	96	517	39-53	140
Honda GL1100-'81	April '82	4C/G	1085.0	12.60/106.5	139	606	41-49	NA
Honda GL1100A Aspencade-'82	April '82	4C/G	1085.0	13.23/98.8	139	724	40-50	145
Honda GL1100I Interstate-'82	April '82	4C/G	1085.0	13.30/99.5	139	697	40-50	NA
Honda MB5-'82	January '82	1B/F	49.5	NA	57	187	NA	NA
Honda Nighthawk 750-'82	March '82	4A/F	748.7	12.74/103.8	131	543	36-49	128
Honda V45 Magna-'82	June '82	4D/G	748.1	12.34/105.9	129	507	30-46	124
Honda V45 Sabre-'82	June '82	4D/G	748.1	12.37/106.8	128	511	29-47	149
Kawasaki GPz550-'82	November '82	4A/F	553.8	13.20/99.6	132	437	43-61	132
Kawasaki GPz1100-'82	May '82	4A/F	1089.9	11.33/119.4	137	534	35-48	127
Kawasaki KZ750-'81	June '81	4A/F	738.0	12.43/108.2	128	471	38-60	128
Kawasaki KZ1000J-'81	February '81	4A/F	998.6	11.62/116.3	130	521	30-51	135
Kawasaki KZ1000R-'82	November '82	4A/F	998.6	11.85/116.7	134	505	35-49	129
Kawasaki KZ1100A-'81	April '81	4A/G	1089.9	11.62/117.6	142	559	38-44	NA
Kawasaki KZ1100 Spectre-'82	March '82	4A/G	1089.9	11.96/110.4	142	553	36-44	132
Suzuki GS450T-'82	June '82	2A/F	448.2	NA	108	389	55-61	NA
Suzuki GS550M Katana-'82	August '82	4A/F	549.7	13.69/95.9	120	449	39-53	135
Suzuki GS650GL-'82	July '82	4A/G	673.9	NA	123	472	49-61	NA
Suzuki GS750E-'82	January '82	4A/F	747.4	12.01/109.1	127	519	34-49	127
Suzuki GS1000S Katana-'81	December '81	4A/F	997.5	11.40/118.7	141	525	33-51	129
Suzuki GS1100E-'82	May '82	4A/F	1074.9	11.20/119.3	141	530	37-49	132
Suzuki GS1100G-'82	September '82	4A/G	1074.9	11.92/114.2	137	555	42-48	138
Suzuki GS1100GK-'82	October '82	4A/F	1074.9	12.58/104.5	137	647	31-44	155
Suzuki GS1100 Twin Turbo-'81	October '81	4A/F	1074.9	NA	172	548	NA	NA
Suzuki XN85 Turbo-'82	July '82	4A/F	673.9	NA	135	492	NA	NA
Yamaha 550 Seca-'82	February '82	4A/F	528.7	NA	121	418	41-55	NA
Yamaha 750 Seca-'81	June '81	4A/G	748.6	12.26/108.0	128	495	44-56	134
Yamaha XJ650 Seca-'82	September '82	4A/G	653.4	12.83/103.4	125	469	44-59	135
Yamaha XJ650LJ Turbo-'82	September '82	4A/G	653.4	12.61/104.6	126	541	39-51	145
Yamaha XS400 Maxim-'82	November '82	2A/F	399.4	14.65/89.3	104	376	52-61	136
Yamaha 750 Virago-'82	January '82	75-deg. 2D/G	748.8	13.28/99.8	105	481	43-48	132
Yamaha 920 Virago-'82	February '82	75-deg. 2D/G	920.0	12.94/101.6	108	514	36-49	134
Yamaha XV920R-'82	February '82	75-deg. 2D/F	920.0	13.10/100.4	112	509	37-51	128

*A-Transverse Vertical, B-Vertical, (single-cylinder only), C-Horizontally Opposed, D-Tandem Vee, E-Transverse Vee, F-Chain Final Drive, G-Shaft Final Drive, H-Belt Final Drive

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"If you count Stage One as the bike Eddie Lawson would ride *to* work, you could figure that Stage Two is not too far off from the one he rides *at* work."—**Pg. 25**

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ON THE COVER:
It's green, it's fast and it has just been made faster. It's a third-degree road burning version of Kawasaki's KZ1000R, as seen through the camera of Cameron Fuji.

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West's Side

The Expert's Hour

Clothes make the man—clothes, and maybe a little competence.

• It was only 10:30 in the morning and already the fierce desert sun beat down like a thumbtack through the top of your skull. The unloading of the bikes went on methodically, yet as always, seemed to be taking entirely too long. There was a certain pre-race fever about everything.

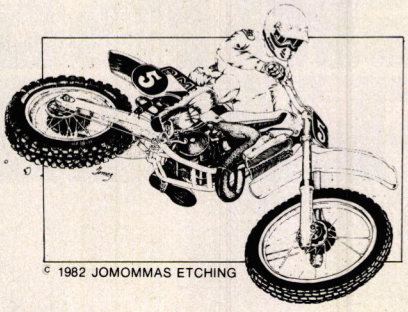
The four of us, all from CYCLE GUIDE, were about to spend a day getting paid to have fun riding dirt bikes. You probably hate us for that, I know, and sometimes I'm acutely conscious of what an exotic thing it is to be paid for doing what, if it were necessary, I'd quite happily rob banks to do. And the one and only trade-off I have to make on days like this is to fully apply whatever professional expertise I may have to the task at hand.

But aye, there's the rub.

See, unlike the other three here today, I don't really know my ass from a hole in the berm. Much as I love dirt riding—which is to say, maybe a little *too* much, but more about that later—I only get the opportunity once or twice a year when I come out to California. But the minute I get here, I go straight to the CYCLE GUIDE garage and start fondling the nearest motocrosser, the look of eagles in my eye. I can't wait to take up right where I left off . . . er, 12 long, forgetful months ago.

And that was precisely my frame of mind this morning. I didn't want to notice that I had been away from dirt bikes so long I'd forgotten the most rudimentary procedures for getting them out of the van. When my bike was entrusted to me partway down the ramp, for instance, I very nearly went over the top from leaning it too far to the lee-side. In a wiser man, this would have been a useful hint. Instead I pressed right on, as meanwhile, visions of sugarplum fairies already danced across the whoopdies, sailed over the jumps, dug deep into the berms. I too would be riding with this same unimaginable skill the moment I got onto a bike.

Well, no, maybe there would be a minute or two getting used to a kind of wheel-slippage I hadn't felt in a year. And perhaps there would be another minute getting used to using my weight differently than I had for the same very considerable time. But it would all come rushing back to me, surely. After all, I was riding for CYCLE GUIDE today, a paid expert. As soon as I strapped on my signature-model CYCLE GUIDE riding gear, the transformation to *Dirt Expert* would begin.



And if I had any doubts, I only had to watch the others. One by one they cranked up, bona fide experts all, and wheelied over the next ridge. I cranked up, rolled on the throttle, the rear wheel lost all traction and began to dive sideways. I had to roll off again—*right away!*

I rolled on more gently now and did a burnout. Immediately I realized how short-coupled this dirt bike felt after what I was used to. And I realized with genuine self-disgust that I was afraid to turn the handlebar on this slippery desert gravel, completely uncertain of how much or how little it would take to wash-out the front wheel. Everything felt like ball-bearings, glare-ice beneath me. So naturally I threw caution to the winds, put a little opposite lock on the bar and gassed it. The bike stood straight up beneath me, steady as a gyroscope on buttered glass. It was exciting. I did it again.

I don't have to tell you what happened for the next 15 minutes. With each passing moment, generous increments of balance, reawakened experience, confidence returned. In no time I was feeling the same manic wildness I always feel on the dirt. Maybe it's because all really good dirt riders are certifiable lunatics, or maybe it's because when I'm on dirt *I* become a certifiable lunatic and need to think everyone else is so I don't feel too out of place. Whatever the truth is, one thing is certain—when I'm having fun on a dirt bike, it is *not* because I'm riding in perfect control.

And by 11 o'clock I was riding very nearly as fast as the three experts I was with. It was foolishness, of course, but I was having all of it I could get. I held the throttle wide-open at least 80 percent more of the time now than I'd been doing just 10 minutes before. I'd gotten used to throwing the bike on its side and sitting bolt upright working the bar, leg out, gassing it, kicking the ground with my foot when things got too thrilling, then accelerating back toward the van at 50 mph or so, the desert hardpan beneath me solid and humorless as poured concrete . . . when suddenly the bike did something completely irrational under me. The rear wheel kicked up, there was a preposterous moment when I couldn't think, an instant of free-fall, then an almighty impact that took hours to be over with. I heard a heavy *crump!* very close to me—in fact, it *was* me—and felt my leg stretch far out to the side. My hands reached in front of me as if I were crawling, except it felt like I'd been dropped from the sky. There was a trashy rattling behind me and a motocross wheel clattered to the ground next to my eye. None of it made sense; it was stupid. And stupidest of all was the animal gurgling I heard. Sounds like that hadn't come out of me since I was 15 years old and got badly hurt playing football; rhythmic, furious growls of agony, my body trying to puke pure pain.

I don't know how long it went on, but I realized I'd crawled 20 feet away from the bike. I tried to get to my knees, fell down like a stack of water. I tried again and this time I was standing, my right leg dragging behind me like a dead cat on a string. David Dewhurst was there now and he said to sit down. I sat down. He asked if I was all right. There was something in my throat, a knot of torture I couldn't slide any words past.

Five minutes later, I was propped up in the back of the van. In just this brief time my right knee was *literally* as big as a medium-size pumpkin. It had gone hot-red. When I touched it, I could see thick ripples of fluid quivering beneath the skin. I held an ice pack to it, curious to see if I was really going to throw up or not.

After a long while, I realized I was staring straight at my experts-only signature-model CYCLE GUIDE leathers. And now it occurred to me, seeing them hanging there limp and torn on the van seat in front of me, that they were just pants. They had flashy words all over them, sure, but they were just pants, they had no magic. This began to seem like pertinent information. And it occurred to me that, despite all my milky notions of expertise during the past hour, there was really only one fact worth knowing—I hadn't ridden on dirt in a long time, a *terribly* long time. In a wiser man—and most particularly, in an expert—that fact would have struck home fully one hour sooner.

—Ted West

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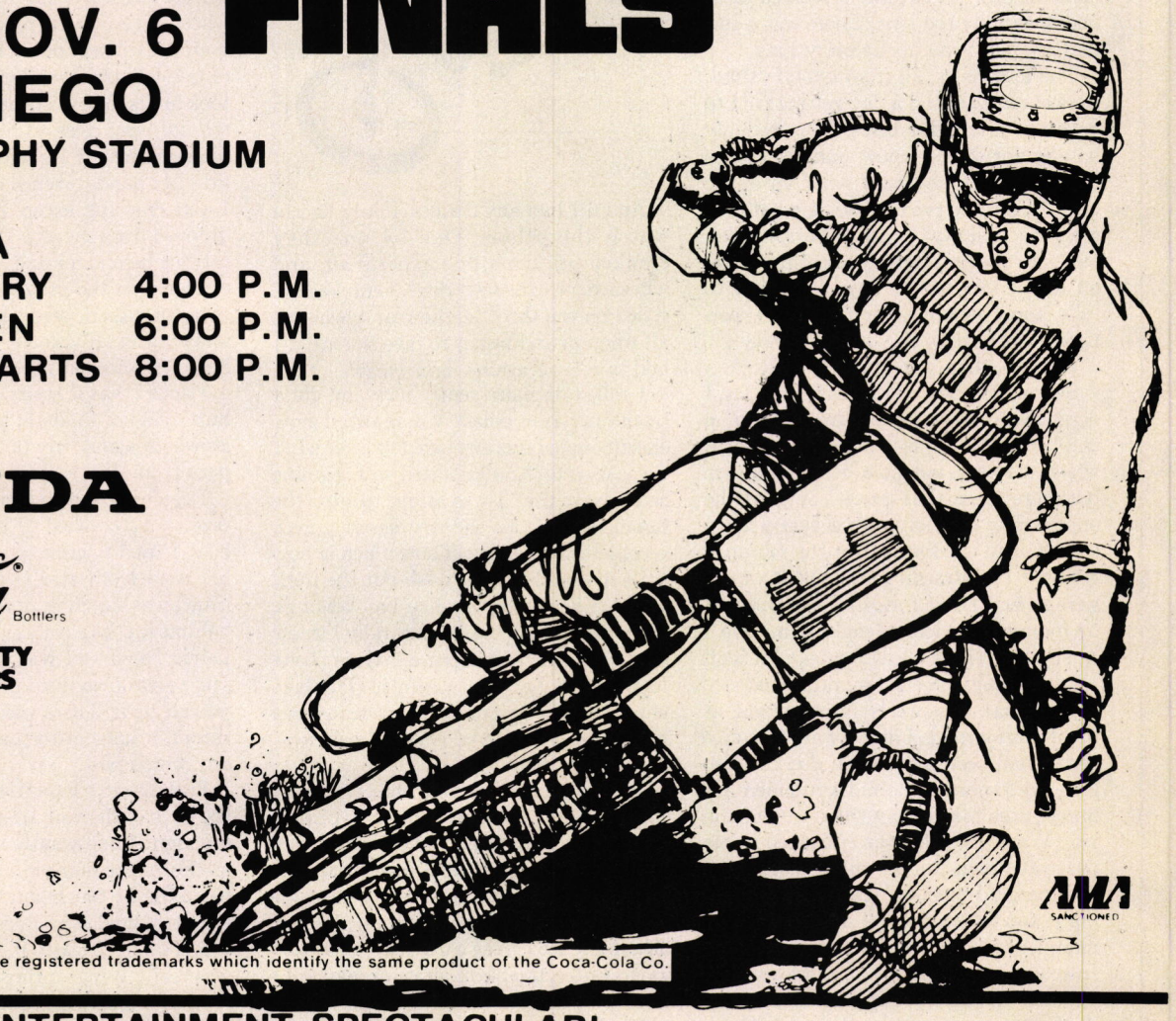

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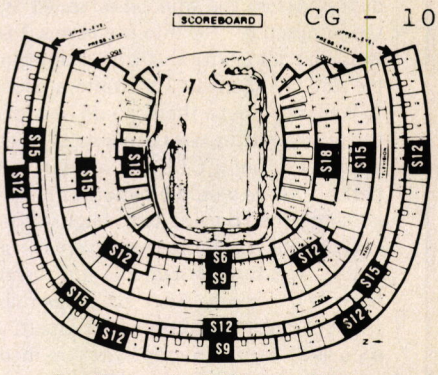

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NATIONAL AMATEUR SUPERCROSS FINALS ● NOVEMBER 7TH

Contact Points

MotoBio

Notions, opinions, expensive shots & pet peeves.

• Have you ever wondered about magazine writers? Like, who are they, and what do *they* know, anyway?

Of course it's a rhetorical question, like the one Butch asked Sundance ("Who are those guys, anyway?"), and there is no single answer. Motojournalists represent a spectrum as varied as any other profession, in terms of experience, personality and ability. Which is why, as enthusiasts, we all read more than one publication. Some magazines I buy solely for the work of one person, whose stuff I find especially informative or entertaining. The surrounding pages might be little more than filler. But for me the book is worth the price just for that one writer, and not only because I might usually agree with him.

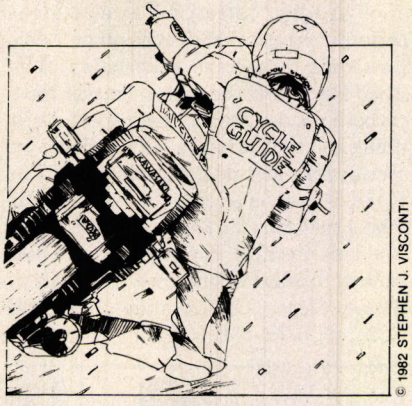
Still, I often puzzle over some of the opinions and reportage offered in the moto-mags. Questions such as, does the guy really believe this or is he out to stroke one of the advertisers? Or, the other way around, does Product X deserve this vicious criticism or is the scribe motivated by an old grudge, which the reader knows nothing about? Or in more general terms, does the writer show reasonable judgment about an event or a machine, or has his perspective been narrowed by an overcrowded mental storeroom of unconscious biases? Or by too many laps on the typewriter, or too many motorcycles, or the wife's attitude at breakfast, or . . .?

Who knows? You don't, because none of that background is available to you. Maybe that's as it should be. Most of these influences are extraneous anyway, and those that do creep into the text usually are curried out by a good editor before the words show up in your mailbox.

Despite all that, I figure that as the new guy in this slot I will just 'fess up in front; post my own list of moto-notions, history, likes, pickable nits and personal proclivities. A sort of get-to-know-your-columnist column. The Editor who works here, by the same name, says it isn't customary to introduce the new scribblers. But he adds that it wouldn't be inappropriate for me to do the honors. Presumptuous maybe, but not improper.

First, I should concede that I have never felt the need to own a motorcycle wider than myself. At the hips. Believe me I've tried, from every imaginable perspective, to establish a reason for a motorcycle to be wide. Aren't any.

The only four-banger I've owned was



© 1982 STEPHEN J. VISCONTI

my first motorcycle, a 1000cc Ariel Square Four. To this day, next to the Ducati vee-twin and Honda vee-four, the Ariel remains one of the smoothest bikes I have directed. It might have been heavy and undersuspended, but it was a beautiful motorcycle that would run dead-even with a Jaguar XKE of 20 years ago.

And yes, my personal narrow-mindedness does extend to the BMW. I do share the widely held respect that BMW has established for Teutonic care and craftsmanship, but the flat twins have never tweaked my wallet reflex. I simply don't care for the vibration or the cylindrical opposition. Just can't shake the image of looking down to see an armadillo grilling on the fins.

Which reminds me of Hank Slattery. Not that he has ever grilled an armadillo, but he does know how to ask the right questions, and is in fact a BMW enthusiast if not an addict. Indeed, it was Slattery who urged me to buy the Ariel, maybe for a dose of British humor in counterpoint to the Bavarian manners of his R69S.

But despite our differences, what Slattery and I shared was an abiding appreciation of the motorcycle's physical beauty. That there was damn little, if any, excuse for a motorcycle to be ugly. And if it was ungainly, then it should do at least one thing exceptionally well to compensate. Many dirt bikes of the early Sixties fit my definition of the category: Greeves, DKW, Maico, and CZ. But then came the Spanish scramblers, which were not only light and fast, but . . . well, pretty.

But this memoir was on roadbikes, where style has always figured more strongly. The Sixties became the last decade when we would see, in any significant numbers, the final editions from the classical period of motorcycle design. It was an era that lasted roughly 30 years; and while some of us moaned about how slow the manufacturers were to rectify problems, the two-wheeled space age still seemed to arrive abruptly. The British, German, Italian and American machines of the period were handsome pieces of work, pleasing to behold. Motorcycles you could *look at* for a spell. And more than once. The Sixties were my growing-up years in motorcycling, and I count them as good ones even without my rose-colored lenses on. At least those bikes that broke more often than seemed necessary could be fixed at home, usually by anyone with a rudimentary grasp of things mechanical. (Fortunate, of course, considering the attention they often demanded. Owning a British motorcycle was never having to say you were unemployed.)

Sure, this is subjective stuff; personal tastes, esthetic standards and all that. But I'm not out to reorder anyone's motorcycle preferences, only to post my own. And for me the phrase "ugly motorcycle" is, or should be, a contradiction in terms, like military intelligence or conventional wisdom.

Of course, we all have our own preferences in style and color, and equally firm attitudes on riding postures. I'm no orthopedic specialist, but I am convinced that the chopper slouch is more suitable for the human frame than either the café crouch or upright seating posture. And while I figure the chopper itself is to the motorcycle as burlesque is to Broadway, that seems to me a positive social factor. There should always be room for comedy.

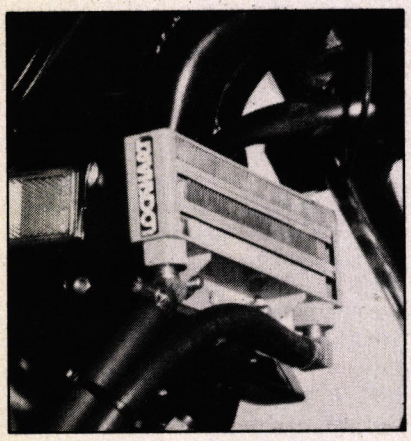
The café crouch fulfills but two needs, as seen through my eyes: cutting the fastest times on the twistiest roads, and pretending to do so. Once, as a feasibility study in masochism, I rode a Ducati Sport across the country. Beyond the conclusion that it would be unnecessary to do it again, the only verifiable benefits of that trip went to my chiropractor.

To the charge of prejudice that some of these confessions might provoke, I say nay. For I have pre-judged no motorcycle; my choices rest on more than a few years of riding, testing, racing, crashing and thinking it all over.

Shucks, I'd hoped to discuss vintage iron and racing heroes, but now I see the lovely Page Bottom approaching. It was nice having this chat. Maybe we can meet back here again. —*T.J. Rafferty*

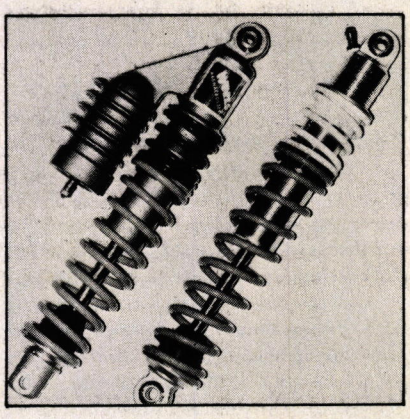
Motomart

Avoid the holiday crowds; shop early.



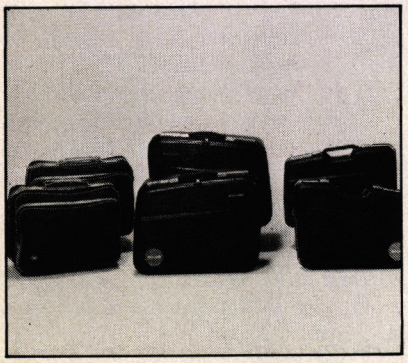
Cooling It: Lockhart can keep your Yamaha vee from losing its cool with a new oil cooler kit designed for the XV series. Included in the kit is Lockhart's 400 Compact cooler, which is designed to mount in a limited space. The kit comes complete with all hoses and adaptors needed for installation. For more information, write Lockhart Consumer Products, Dept. CG, 15555 Texaco Street, Paramount, California 90723, or call (800) 421-1872. California motorcyclists can call (213) 774-2981.

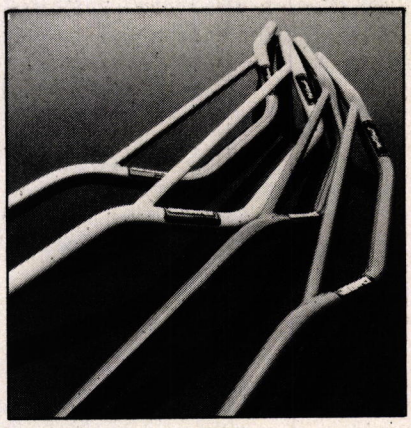
For Better and Works: Works Performance has just released a line of high-performance street shocks based on Eddie Lawson's Superbike suspension. The Road Racer and the Street Tracker models both are designed for high-speed street riding and each is individually tailored for specific bike-and-rider combinations. The Road Racer is a piggyback-reservoir model that sells for $340 a set. The Street Trackers are $220. For more information, contact Works Performance, 8730 Shirley Street, Dept. CG, Northridge, California 91324; (213) 701-1010.



Four-Stroking It: PJ1 Corporation is sliding into the four-stroke oil market on its new 10W-40 high-performance motor oil. The oil is SF-rated and exceeds all motorcycle manufacturers' quality recommendations. Its resealable plastic container features an easy-pour spout. To learn more, write or call PJ1 Corporation, 5955 DeSoto Avenue, Dept. CG, Woodland Hills, California 91367; (213) 887-6704.

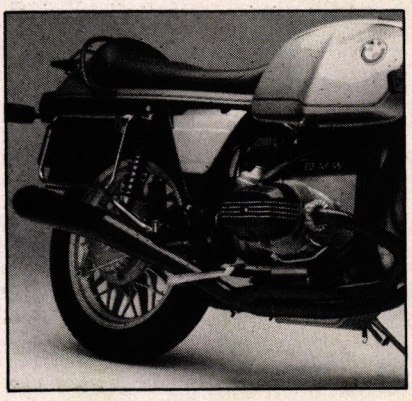
Krauser Lugguge: The length of your trip typically is proportional to the amount of stuff you need to strap, bungie or otherwise heap onto your bike. And because short trips as well as long hauls fall into the scope of touring, Krauser has a luggage system that uses the same brackets for three different-size saddlebags. The Starlet model will carry 25 liters, the Deluxe has a capacity of 35 liters and the top-of-the-line Star will hold 40 liters. All of Krauser's luggage is covered by an unconditional lifetime guarantee. For more information, call (800) 426-1346.





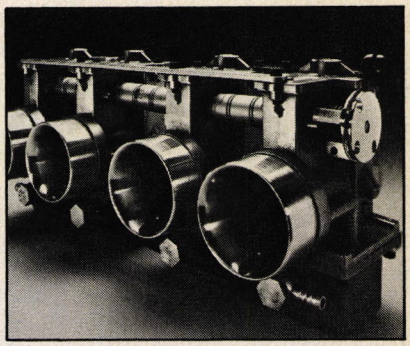
Chro-bars: If you don't occasionally tweak your handlebar, you're not trying hard enough. But for those times when you're trying a little *too* hard, Answer Products has a handlebar made of 4130 chromoly tubing. The handlebar is available in Zinc Gold plating, or coated in red, yellow or blue urethane, and it sells for $27.95. A carbon-steel version also is available, for $19.95. Answer Products, Incorporated, Dept. CG, 27967 Beale Court, Valencia, California 91355; (805) 257-4411.

Pipe Beems: DG Performance Specialties has expanded its line of street exhaust systems to include BMW. The new two-into-one Beemer pipes are claimed to increase output by up to eight horsepower. They also feature a Kal-Gard black enamel finish for corrosion protection. The suggested retail price is $144.50. The exhaust systems are available through most motorcycle dealerships, or through DG Performance Specialties, Incorporated, Dept. CG, 1230 La Loma Circle, Anaheim, California 92806; (714) 630-5470.



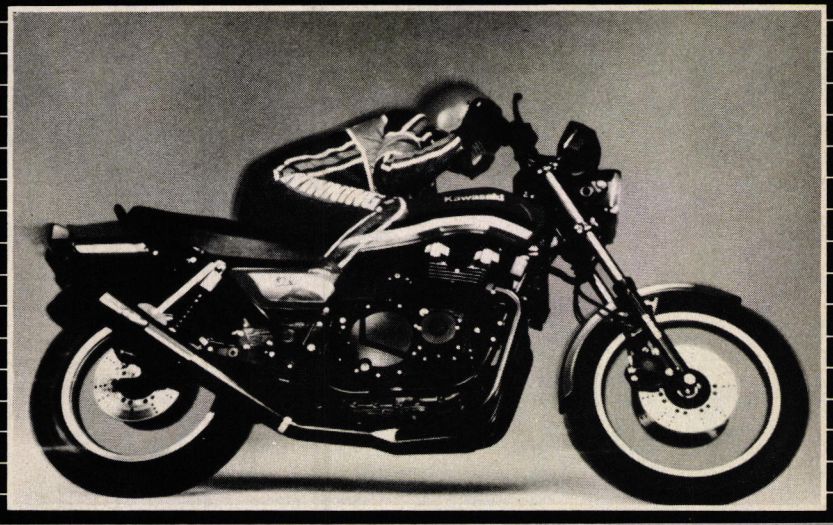
Big Rubber: Metzeler Tire has what it claims is the widest DOT-approved tire you can buy. The 150/70V18 ME 99A Sport is a low-profile street tire, available in Metzeler's soft Sport compound. Suggested retail price is $98. For more information, contact Metzeler Tire Company, Dept. CG, P.O. Box 15536, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15244.

Roger II: In the high-fashion world of motocross, showing up on the starting line with last week's gloves can be disastrous. To save yourself from that everlasting shame, you can get a pair of De Coster II gloves from Hallman Racing. The De Coster IIs are made of goatskin, and have a foam-padded back and a ribbed-knit cuff. The gloves come in color combinations of red/white/blue, blue/yellow/white, and black/yellow/white, and in sizes 8 through 11. They are available from motorcycle dealers or from Torsten Hallman Racing U.S.A., Dept. CG, 1330 Hill St., El Cajon, California 92020.



Hi-yo Silver: Carburetor jetting got you down? Well, now you can eliminate that problem by using carbs just like Fast Freddie Spencer's: Qwik Silvers from Edvac. Edvac claims the single-fuel-metering-rod design simplifies adjustments, and that the carb automatically compensates for altitude changes. Furthermore, the guillotine-type slide is claimed to create a higher-velocity air flow, for increased fuel atomization and better throttle response. For more information, contact Edvac, Dept. CG, 7146 Santa Fe Ave. East, Hesperia, California 82345.

THE WINNING SPIRIT



Born within you, it lays dormant. As you mount the bike, it grows in anticipation, waiting patiently until the moment it is unleashed. With the twist of the throttle, your transportation into another dimension begins. Your WINNING exhaust system, pulsating performance as you rocket away.

Suddenly it happens, the feeling of one being... You, the motorcycle and your WINNING exhaust system. WINNING, the combination with the difference... Performance.

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Exhaust system pictured – $225 Chrome and $205 Kal Gard.

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Prices are retail and subject to change without notification.

Winning

WINNING PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS, 15137 Califa St., Van Nuys, Ca. 91411 (213) 780-0754.

Still tucked behind the smoked windscreen of the lime-green quarter-fairing, you throw your weight hard right as you follow a jutting knee that points to the inside of a turn. A quick downshift, then you accelerate up the hill to the esses, revving to redline before every gearchange as the exhaust note howls inside your helmet. No brake and plenty of throttle puts you through the esses, and as you crest the ridge on the far side the front ends gets light—*what the heck, give the crowd a thrill*—and the front wheel gets airborne. As soon as the front tire kisses the pavement, you're on the brakes, readying the bike for the next obstacle . . . a stop sign.

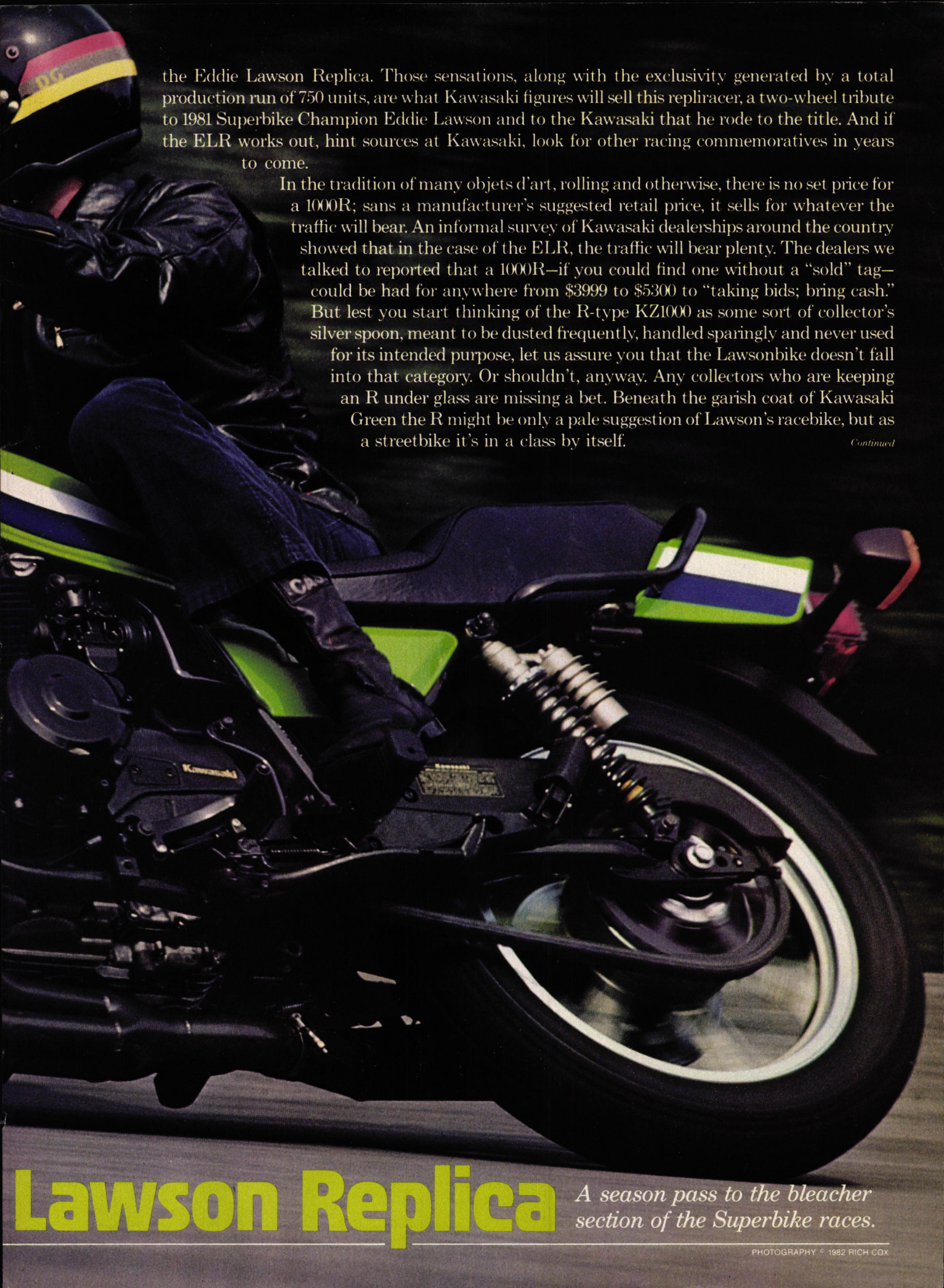
A stop sign? What is a stop sign doing in the middle of LagunaRoad-AmericaDaytona? Simple. It isn't. But then, neither are you. It just *feels* like you are, an illusion courtesy of the roadracy sights, sounds and kinesthetics of the Kawasaki KZ1000R, aka

CYCLE GUIDE • NOVEMBER 1982

ROAD TEST:

Kawasaki KZ1000R Eddie

BY LARRY WORKS



the Eddie Lawson Replica. Those sensations, along with the exclusivity generated by a total production run of 750 units, are what Kawasaki figures will sell this repliracer, a two-wheel tribute to 1981 Superbike Champion Eddie Lawson and to the Kawasaki that he rode to the title. And if the ELR works out, hint sources at Kawasaki, look for other racing commemoratives in years to come.

In the tradition of many objets d'art, rolling and otherwise, there is no set price for a 1000R; sans a manufacturer's suggested retail price, it sells for whatever the traffic will bear. An informal survey of Kawasaki dealerships around the country showed that in the case of the ELR, the traffic will bear plenty. The dealers we talked to reported that a 1000R—if you could find one without a "sold" tag—could be had for anywhere from $3999 to $5300 to "taking bids; bring cash." But lest you start thinking of the R-type KZ1000 as some sort of collector's silver spoon, meant to be dusted frequently, handled sparingly and never used for its intended purpose, let us assure you that the Lawsonbike doesn't fall into that category. Or shouldn't, anyway. Any collectors who are keeping an R under glass are missing a bet. Beneath the garish coat of Kawasaki Green the R might be only a pale suggestion of Lawson's racebike, but as a streetbike it's in a class by itself.

Continued

Lawson Replica

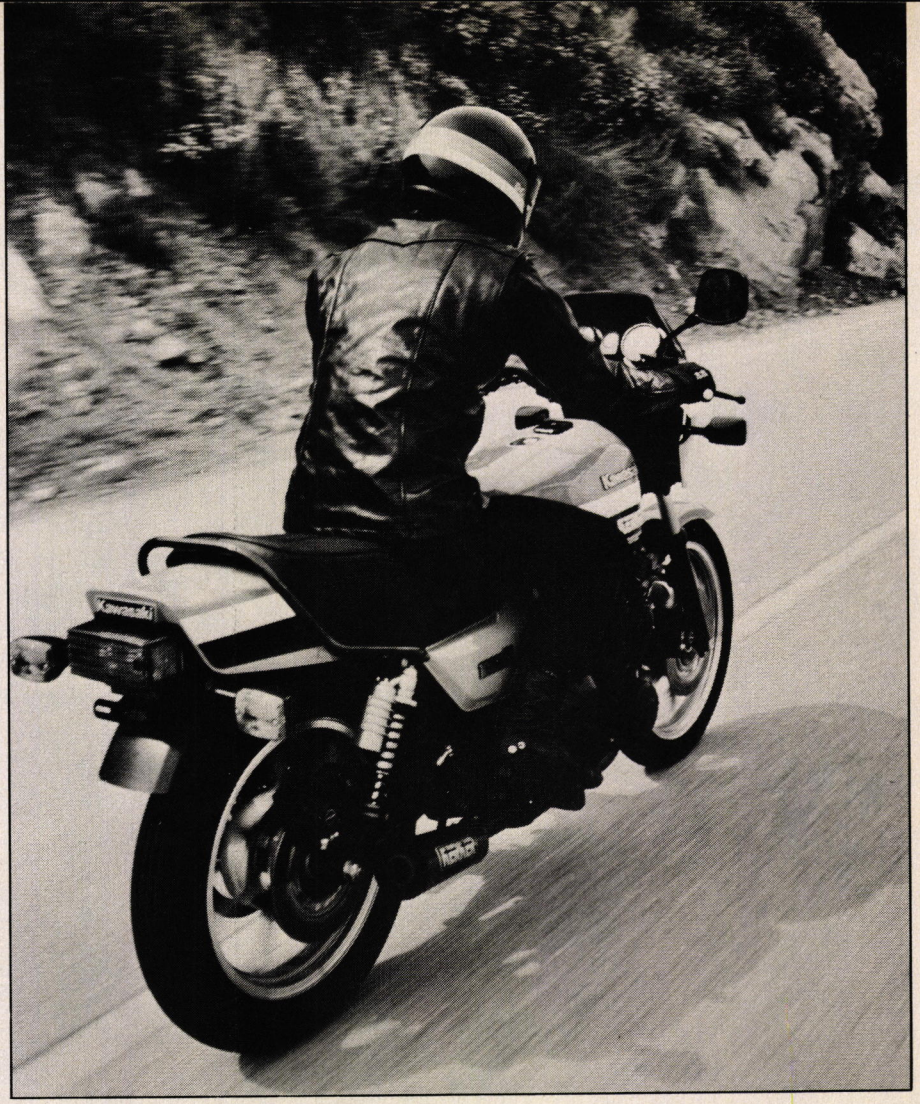
A season pass to the bleacher section of the Superbike races.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 RICH COX

Part of the R's individuality stems from the fact that it's a liter-sized sportbike in a market turning toward 1100s. But since Lawson clinched the title on a 1000-class Superbike (1023cc actual displacement), the R was built as a literbike and not around the GPz1100 engine. The heart of the Green Machine is not a cammy, high-strung race engine, though, no matter how loudly the R's appearance might shout it. Instead, it's a bone-stock KZ1000 engine, identical—down to the pistons, valves, springs, ignition, carburetion and gears—to the two-valve, 998cc transverse four that powers the 1000J. And it more or less had to be that way. If the Lawsonbike had had a hot-rod motor in place of the J-engine, retooling and EPA certification for the limited-production R would have delayed the project and driven the cost higher.

But the stock KZ1000 engine doesn't cripple the R; why should it? It is, with a mild redesign in 1981, the same basic engine that's been wrinkling pavement since the first Z-1 rolled out of a showroom in 1973. And Kawasaki *did* give the R an edge over the J by taking another established route to high performance: If you're not going to add power, take off weight.

In shaving pounds off of the R, the J-model's centerstand and four-into-two exhaust system just didn't fit into the program. Not only were they heavy, they just didn't look the part. In place of the J's double-wall plumbing went a Kerker KR single-wall four-into-one pipe that not only looks like it just came off of Lawson's racebike, it tucks in to give the R considerably more ground clearance. The lack of a centerstand and a lighter exhaust are the two largest factors accounting for a weight difference of 16 pounds between R and J. But the R feels even lighter than its weight advantage would suggest. In part, that's a result of the effect that rider placement had on the R's center of gravity. The notched-out seat positions the rider's torso 1.6 inches lower than on the plain-vanilla J, and the low, fairly wide handlebar (a K&N bend that's reportedly identical to the one on Lawson's racebike) contributes to the low-placed rider weight. The result is a streetbike that, through weight savings and thoughtful weight placement, feels and handles more like a 750 than like most literbikes.



The KZ1000R's sensory overload turns any canyon into your favorite racetrack

And leaves you wishing for a set of lime-green leathers.

The rest of the recipe for this light-handling 1000 includes a grab bag of GPz and J-model parts. Like the engine, the R's frame comes from the J's parts list, though with its steering head angle kicked out 1.5 degrees to 29 and trail bumped to 4.5 inches to slow the steering for the high road speeds Kawasaki figures the R will see. A J-model fork calibrated for more damping slips into the R's triple clamps. The black alternator, clutch, countershaft, ignition, starter and cam covers started out in GPz parts bins—as did the oil cooler bolted to the frame downtubes—and ended up giving the R an all-black engine, save for the bank of 34mm constant-vacuum Mikunis. The footpeg carriers and the attendant shift and brake

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

Make and Model	Quarter-Mile, sec/mph	Top Speed, mph	Weight, lbs	Stopping Distance From 60 mph, ft.
Kawasaki KZ1000R–'82	11.85/116.7	134	505	129
Kawasaki KZ1000J–'81	11.62/116.3	130	521	135
Suzuki GS1000S Katana–'81	11.40/118.7	141	525	129
Honda CB900F–'81	12.21/111.1	141	547	130
Kawasaki GPz1100–'82	11.33/119.4	137	534	127
Suzuki GS1100E–'82	11.20/119.3	141	530	132

linkages are GPz items, which raise the R's pegs nearly an inch and move them back four inches from the J's location. Bodywork—minus the green overlay, of course—is á la GPz, as is the R's front brake master cylinder, which, with its larger-than-J-type piston, requires less lever travel than the J's.

But the R isn't exclusively a creature of the parts bins. Apart from the Kerker exhaust, there *are* pieces of the Eddie Lawson Replica that can't be found on either J-model or GPz parts lists. Among them are the Showa aluminum-body, remote-reservoir gas shocks, which are adjustable only for preload via a twin-collar arrangement on the shock body and which are set up with stiffer springs and more damping than either J or GPz units. The R's Enkei cast wheels are similar to both GPz and J items, but the rear is 0.35-inch wider than the J's and both have a dash of gold anodizing as a Lawsonesque flash. Fitted to the wheels are Dunlop K300s, the OEM rubber that outperformed many aftermarket tires in CYCLE GUIDE's tire test (September 1982 issue). The rear Dunlop is identical to a GPz1100's, but the front is an M-designated K300, a second-generation version developed just for this machine. It has a slightly different tread pattern and buttressed sidewalls to enhance its cornering performance.

In addition to the front tire, there are enough items proprietary to the replibike to make a convincing argument that the R is more than a high-fashion J-model dressed to the eyes in green and black. But if you need even more convincing, depressing the starter button provides ample evidence. When the R starts to pump its tune through the Kerker KR, you'll be convinced, all right, as visions of pit crews and quick-fill fuel tanks start to filter in. But it's in the riding, not just the sensory impressions, that the ELR achieves its rightful sportbike status.

Even a low-speed ride around the block demonstrates the R's superb ergonomic layout. The width of the handlebar provides enough leverage to throw the bike around with ease. And because it's a conventional one-piece handlebar, as opposed to the compound clip-ons that are standard GPz fare, it's easy to replace if it doesn't feel right. You probably won't want to replace it, though, at least not if you fall into the 5′8″ to 6′3″ height range of the *CG* testing staff. Each of our testers came away from the bike feeling that the ELR had been tailored for him alone.

But the low-speed cruise doesn't begin to show off the Lawsonbike's performance. *That* you get to experience when the ELR hits its first fast sweeper. It handles high-speed cornering almost effortlessly, with no twitchiness or hesitation as long as the pavement is smooth. You can hold a line or change lines and the R won't fight back. But if you're the type of rider who gauges his efforts by the scuffed outer edges of his riding boots, the R might not appeal, because you have to go a long way over before your boots—or anything else except the K300s, for that matter—will touch down on pavement. The Dunlops let you reach that degree of lean without slippage or vagueness, but you still have to work to get something to scrape. The only time the ELR gets out of shape in cornering is when the rear wheel passes over some pavement irregularity, because the shocks can't soak up the jolt. Even on their softest preload setting, the shocks are oversprung for street use and occasionally can cause rear-wheel hop over bumps at high speed.

Stiff shocks are also the main flaw in the ELR's highway personality. While the fork will handle most road undulations with only minor traces reaching the rider, the rear end passes over the same bumps—pavement changes, expansion joints or whatever—and seemingly delivers an undiminished jolt straight up through the seat. The seat itself is more comfortable than its notched-out shape would suggest; but because that shape was apparently reached by simply carving out a section of a roughly standard seat, the R's saddle is somewhat wide, forcing the rider to assume a full-time splay-legged seating posture. The lowered seat does, however, place the rider low enough on the bike to where he can more easily tuck behind the ELR's quarter-fairing, using it for wind deflection as well as a styling device. But fairing or not, the Kawasaki replibike can't be confused with an Interstate-gobbler. It is, perhaps, best used on the highway to connect sections of twisty road.

If you've added up the pluses and minuses of Kawasaki's first foray into repli-racing, you might already have concluded that since it doesn't match the specifications for Lawson's racebike, the R can't rightly be called a replica at all. To qualify as a replica per se, the ELR would have to match Lawson's racer, point for point—including the ability to cut winning laps against race-only hardware on the track. And for all its sporting prowess, the 1000R Lawson Replica can't do that.

What it *can* do, though, is perhaps of more value to its would-be rider: It makes you *feel* as if you just won pole position on a Superbike starting grid. And it does it on anything from a Sunday morning canyon-charge to a Monday morning commute.

Ride Review

• I love it. Of course it would be Kawasaki that would put a Kerker pipe (sans centerstand), a bit more muscle and the eye-poppingest green paint imaginable on a standard-fare 1000J and sell it as a stock machine. These are the kinds of changes confirmed crazies make on their own, but here there's no chance of botching the job in the process. With the 1000R I wouldn't have to turn a single wrench—or strip a single thread—just sign on the dotted line and make the monthly payments.

And what I'd get for that once-a-month check-mailing would be a machine almost guaranteed to put me in pseudo-racer heaven—and more fun than should be legal. In fact, it might be wise to hold the revs down around Officer Do-my-duty, anyway; the howl of that Kerker could be too much for him. But there's an out here, too. "It's a *stock* bike, honest."

—Joe Kress

• Repliracers aren't supposed to win races. They win hearts. And the 1000R took mine from the first turn; it was no contest. Not because the 1000R responds like a Superbike, either. It needs more power and better suspension to do that.

The 1000R performs in a different way: The Repli Way. I get the *sensations* of what it's like to ride a Superbike racer with this machine. The bucket seat, low-slung handlebar and quarter-fairing put me in Eddie Lawson's world. I feel like Fast Eddie everytime I peel off for a turn, or crack the throttle for a downshift, and hear the Kerker's bellowing note squelch the rush of wind around my helmet. Now, if I can only find a long-legged trophy queen to greet me with a chilled bottle of champagne after I cross the driveway finish line, I'll really feel like a Superbike champion.

—Dain Gingerelli

• I hate to be the sole voice of discontent here, but I'm not impressed with the KZ1000R. Its looks promise something very special in the way of performance but its mechanicals just don't deliver. Which only stands to reason, I guess, since aside from the Kerker pipe, the awful shocks and the overlay of Mean Green paint, virtually everything on the bike is borrowed from either a GPz1100 or a KZ1000J. But the R isn't even as quick as those two, nor does it handle as well. And in my opinion, not establishing a suggested retail price for this ersatz racer is like giving the dealers a license to steal.

Look, repliracers are fine with me so long as they replicate (they don't have to duplicate) performance as well as appearance. But the R doesn't. And where do you think Eddie Lawson would be today if his bike only *looked* fast?

—Paul Dean

Continued

CYCLE GUIDE SPECIFICATIONS

Kawasaki KZ1000R — street

IMPORTER: Kawasaki Motors Corp., 2009 East Edinger Ave., Santa Ana, California 92711

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: none; price set by dealer

ENGINE

Type ..... four-stroke transverse vertical four
Valve arrangement ..... double overhead camshafts
Bore and stroke ..... 69.4mm x 66.0mm
Displacement 998.6cc
Compression ratio 9.2:1
Engine redline ..... 8500 rpm
Carburetion ..... four 34mm Mikuni constant-vacuum
Air filter ..... disposable paper element
Lubrication ..... wet sump
Starting system ..... electric only
Ignition ..... transistorized breakerless
Charging system ..... 12-volt; 280-watt alternator, voltage regulator/rectifier, 18 ampere-hour battery

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive ..... straight-cut gears; 1.732:1 ratio
Clutch ..... wet, multi-plate
Final drive ..... #630 O-ring chain (3/4-in. pitch, 3/8-in. width); 2.733:1 (41/15) ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	2.643	12.510	6.2
II	1.833	8.678	8.9
III	1.429	6.762	11.5
IV	1.174	5.557	13.9
V	1.040	4.923	15.7

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front ..... Kayaba air-spring, 38mm stanchion tube diameter/5.9 in. (150mm)
Rear ..... dual Showa shocks, 20mm spring preload adjustment/4.1 in. (104mm)

BRAKES

Front ..... dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 11.1-in. (282mm) discs
Rear ..... single-action hydraulic caliper, 10.6-in. (270mm) disc

TIRES

Front ..... 100/90V19 Dunlop K300M tubeless
Rear ..... 120/90V18 Dunlop K300 tubeless

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Weight ..... 505 lbs. (229kg)
Weight distribution ..... 47.8% front, 52.2% rear
Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) ..... 917 lbs. (416kg)
Load capacity (with full fuel tank) ..... 377 lbs. (171kg)
Wheelbase ..... 60.0 to 60.6 in. (1525 to 1540mm)
Seat height ..... 30.8 in. (782mm)
Handlebar width ..... 29.7 in. (754mm)
Footpeg height ..... 14.3 in. (364mm)
Ground clearance ... 4.8 in. (122mm), at exhaust collector
Steering head angle ..... 29.0 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail ..... 4.53 in. (115mm)
Frame ..... tubular mild steel, double front downtubes
Oil capacity ..... 3.9 qt. (3.7*l*)
Fuel tank ..... steel, 5.8 gal. (22*l*), including 1.7 gal. (6.5*l*) reserve
Instrumentation ..... speedometer, tachometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, fuel gauge

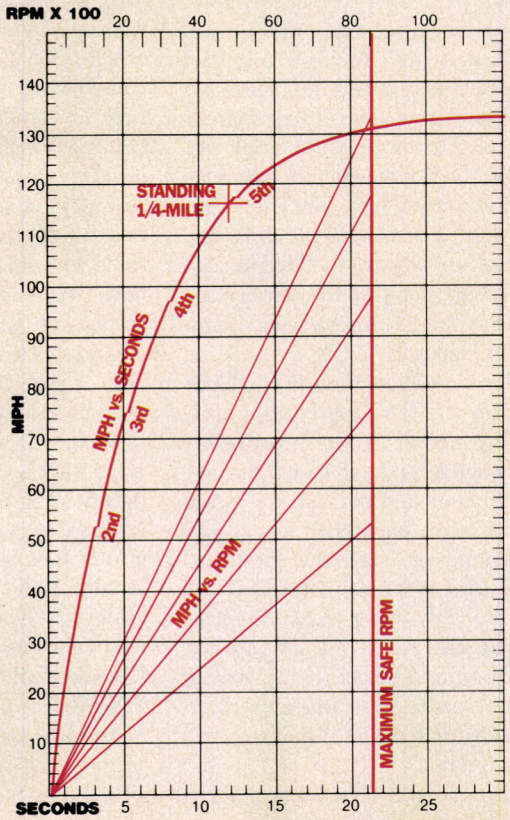
PERFORMANCE

Fuel consumption ..... 35 to 49 mpg (15 to 21 km/*l*)
Average fuel consumption ..... 41 mpg (17 km/*l*)
Cruising range, maximum ..... 203 to 284 miles (327 to 457km)
Cruising range, reserve only ..... 59 to 83 miles (95 to 134km)
Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated ..... 31 mph actual
Speedometer error, 55 mph indicated ..... 56 mph actual
Best 1/4-mile acceleration ..... 11.849 sec., 116.73 mph (188 km/h)
Top speed (calculated at redline) ... 134 mph (216 km/h)
Stopping distance from 30 mph ..... 32 ft. (10m)
Stopping distance from 60 mph ..... 129 ft. (39m)

WARRANTY: 6 months unlimited mileage

AVAILABLE COLOR: green only

All weights and measurements are taken with machine unladen and fuel tank empty



STAGE ONE:

Dressed To The Tens

The stock KZ1000R promises eyeball-squashing acceleration and roadrace-like handling. This one delivers it.

BY DAIN GINGERELLI

• The KZ1000R is like most other repli-racers: It looks brutally fast but isn't. Not by racing standards, at least, for the KZ1000R is a replica of a racebike only in a cosmetic sense. It is, like just about every other replibike, intended to capitalize on the success of a for-real racing machine—in this case, the one that Eddie Lawson rode to the 1981 Superbike championship—by looking as much like the original as possible. But to think that any street-legal, warranteeable, socially responsible motorcycle could come even *close* to matching the performance of one of the world's finest racing machines is sheer folly.

Still, there are familial ties between Lawson's Original and Kawasaki's Copy that are traceable all the way back to the assembly line. Both bikes use the same engine as a foundation and share the same basic frame design, and both wear the same essential bodywork. So although Lawson's racer has more handmade, cost-is-no-object bits and pieces than you could shake a checkered flag at, it *is*, after all, a liter-sized (1023cc, actually) Kawasaki four. And so is the 998cc KZ1000R Replica.

With that kinship in mind, then, we figured it would be entirely possible to transform the Replica into the perfect stablemate for Lawson's Real Thing. Not a purebred racing stablemate, mind you, for going head-to-head with Lawson on the track, but a *street*-going companion that even Eddie himself would love to ride to work. So in collaboration with Kerker Exhaust Systems—involving the use of Kerker's Schenck dyno, R&D facilities and, most of all, extensive experience in working with Kawasaki's factory Superbikes—we set out to build that bike in two stages. Stage One, which you'll read about here, is what we call the Rational Replica, a tractable, manageable, fully streetable everyday bike that still is capable of blitzing the quarter-mile in the tens and carving up canyon roads in a Lawson-like fashion. And Stage Two, which is outlined in a story that follows this one, is the Radical Replica, as much of a knee-dragging, asphalt-searing, true Superbike-clone as Kerker could manage that still could be used on the street without getting its rider arrested just for being near it.

To achieve the Stage One level of performance, we toyed with the 1000R's suspension a little and its engine a lot. The net result, according to Kerker's dyno, was 105 horsepower at the countershaft, 33 more than the stock Green Meanie produced. We kept the stock Kerker KR four-into-one pipe but increased the compression ratio to 10.5:1 and the displacement to 1136cc using Wiseco 74mm high-dome pistons. A special head

Continued

PHOTOGRAPHY • 1982 DAVE BUSH

Extensive parts list produces a 46-percent horsepower increase and transforms the Great Pretender into a repliracer supreme

With stickier tires and Lawson-like rear shocks to give it handling to match.

gasket is included in the Wiseco kit, but the remainder of the gaskets are stock-spec, pulled from an IBCO kit.

Although the intake and exhaust ports were left stock, the cylinder head was endowed with a set of high-lift camshafts. Both intake and exhaust cams are Web-Cam grind number 110, which translates to .395-inch of lift and 284 degrees of duration (measured at .020-inch of lift). A set of Hypercycle SP-116 heavy-duty springs insures that the valves snap shut during five-digit speed-shifts—a vital ingredient in an engine capable of spinning well over 10,000 rpm.

All of that high-performance muscle is concealed within the black engine cases, but the 33mm Mikuni smoothbore carbs are easily identifiable to knowledgeable riders, so you can at least do a *little* hot-rod profiling. K&N Oval Separate air filters replace the R's stock airbox. And to insure that the engine remained intact while the CYCLE GUIDE staff played Eddie Lawson, we had Kerker take two reliability precautions: The crankpins were welded to the flywheels to keep the press-fit crank aligned while all that high-revving horsepower was being generated; and larger case studs from A-1 Thread Rolling were inserted so the motor stayed glued together when operating temperatures soared.

© 1982 PATRICK BEHAR

The homework done, it was time to ride the Stage One Superbike Replica

Lessons learned by Eddie Lawson apply to this bike, too.

On the other hand, chassis modifications were minimal. Since the 1000R frame is not altogether different from the one on Lawson's racer, we left it as is except for the addition of a steering damper to steady the handling in the fast sweepers. And for better roadholding, we mounted a set of Pirelli Phantom tires to the stock wheels. The kidney-jarring stock rear shocks went away in favor of Works Performance units, which are the same suspension units used on the KZ1000S Superbike that Kawasaki sells to select AMA roadracers. Finally, Russell steel-braided brake lines squeezed the stock rubber hoses out of the act.

Performance evaluations began with professional dragracer Pee Wee Gleason turning consistent 10.8-second ETs at the strip. He managed a best run of 10.75/125

Web-Cam 110-grind cams help mixture flow through stock ports

To take advantage of a quick exit through the Kerker KR collector pipe.

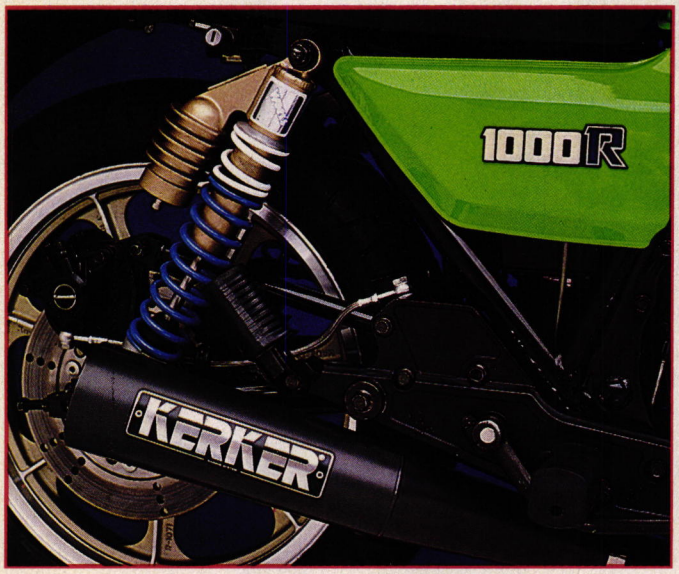
mph using the street baffle. We then installed the louder, less-restrictive race baffle and Gleason promptly cranked out 10.70/129 mph.

We then took Stage One out to prowl the backroads, where it gave us a *real* idea of what Lawson experiences on the banks of Daytona or through the Corkscrew at Laguna Seca. You don't have to do much pretending on this bike. To begin with, the modified R doesn't idle like the stocker. It lopes erratically and the cases almost seem to pulsate down around 1000 rpm. But there's no hesitation off of idle, because even though the smoothbores and raised compression prefer high rpm—like 7000 to 10,000—they're able and willing at low speed. The throttle response is abrupt, though, a reminder that there are 105 wild horses on tap down there, ready to gallop at the mere twitch of the wrist.

The *serious* power kicks in around seven grand, and it gives you a rush of acceleration that tests how firmly your arms are attached to their sockets. We pitted the Stage One bike in a series of roll-ons against a GPz1100, itself no slouch in the acceleration department, and the GPz got the jump, initially moving about a bike-length ahead; but as soon as Stage One found 7000 rpm the contests were over and the GPz became only a small image in the 1000R's mirrors.

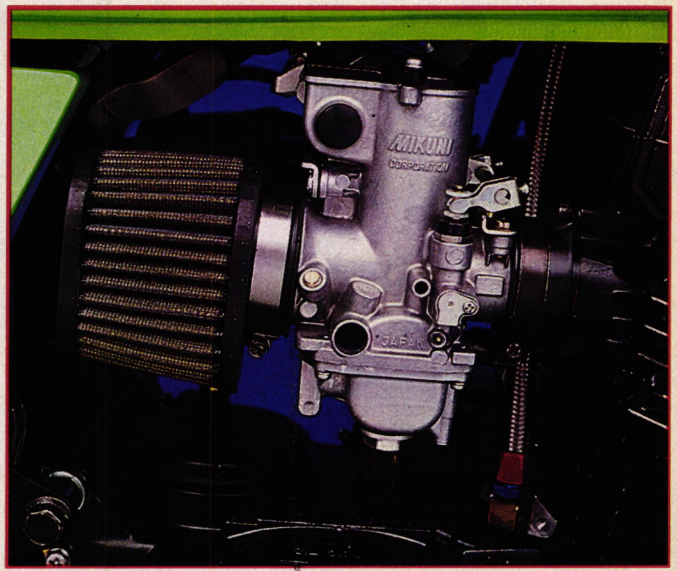
So, too, did the Stage One R-model give the GPz fits in the twisties. The R's lighter weight and lower center of gravity made peeling off into turns an easier and more natural move; and the Works shocks, though still stiff by streetbike standards, gave the kind of stability in less-than-smooth corners that the stockers couldn't. So with that improvement, aided by the sticky Pirellis and abetted by the engine's newfound horsepower, the Stage One KZ1000R *felt* like a real racebike in addition to looking like one.

Of course, that transformation didn't come cheaply; and, as indicated by Stage One's thirst for fuel (it averaged about 15 to 20 percent poorer mileage than either the GPz1100 or the stock KZ1000R), it will keep on costing you, as well. But this bike isn't about fuel economy, of all things; it's about performance. *High* performance. The kind that everyone likes to talk about but very few ever get to experience. Eddie Lawson knows what that kind of performance is all about. And on a Stage One KZ1000R Lawson Replica, so could you.



Works Performance Shocks—right off the Superbike shelf

Getting the handle on Superbike handling.



K&N Oval Separates protect the 33mm Mikuni smoothbores

The starting point for 105 horsepower.

Continued

STAGE TWO:

Lawson In Sight

Finally, racetrack performance to match the racy looks.

BY DAIN GINGERELLI

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 DAVE BUSH

• I'm not ashamed to say it: I felt like a kid riding our Stage Two bike. It was Christmastime in August at Willow Springs Raceway. For one hot summer day I got to play on our final-phase Eddie Lawson Replica, a bike packed with high-performance chassis components and an engine that pumps out 125 horses. For an afternoon, I felt like a Superbike racer.

Okay, so I'm not a Superbike racer, but since I *have* ridden a Superbike before (ridden, not raced), I know what to expect from one. They feel like our Stage Two KZ1000R.

As the name confirms, Stage Two is one step beyond our opening act: producing a bike that not only looks like but *performs* like Fast Eddie's Superbike. To attain that goal, we stretched the potential of the 1000R so much that the only place to test it to its limits was the racetrack. So the nine turns of Willow Springs Raceway became our test lab.

The Mojave Desert air was already 100 degrees when Dave Bush and Bruce Enderle from Kerker arrived with the bike. Paul Dean and I waited, anxious to unload the bike and unleash its power on the track. As they rolled the bike down the ramp, it was obvious that the Stage Two machine even looked like a Superbike, sporting KR500 disc brakes, Morris mag wheels, huge Dunlop Elite tires, a polished Cal-Fab

swingarm and handmade rearsets (Enderle's and Bush's work).

While Enderle topped-up the gas tank and made final preparations for us to try out our new hot rod, Bush briefed us on the bike's engine. "This one will be noticeably faster than Stage One's."

Indeed. 76mm Wiseco pistons had pushed the displacement to 1197cc, and necessitated resleeving the cylinders. In addition, the engine cases were bored for the larger jugs, and the compression ratio jumped to a nasty 13.1:1. The 33mm Mikuni smoothbores were given larger ports to feed, too. Sid Pogue, an East Coast dragracer who understands the breathing capacity of Kawasaki cylinder heads, ported the intake and exhaust tunnels. The stock-diameter valves are actuated using Andrews Products 11X cams. Their Mount Everest-like lobes have .450-inch lift and 266 degrees of duration measured at .030-inch lift. A set of Andrews underbucket cam shims and heavy-duty springs are incorporated into the valve train, too.

The result: more horsepower than any normally aspirated street motorcycle I've ever ridden. Enough to push the final-stage bike to a 10.28/137 quarter-mile—and to offer the promise of a half-second-quicker quarter with a wheelie bar in place. And there's more. For starters—and stoppers—there are the KR500 disc brakes, which Kawasaki will sell to qualified AMA Superbike riders only. Performance Machine mated the brakes to the Morris mags—WM4 front, WM6 rear. These rims have the necessary width to spread the 110/90V19 and 140/80V18 Dunlop Elites far enough so they won't squirm under fierce cornering.

Enderle wiped off the single drop of Dayco racing fuel he had spilled on the gas tank, then indicated the bike was ready. Bush motioned me to the saddle, and as I fastened my helmet he said, "Oh, one more thing." He pointed to the frame tubes behind the engine, "The driveside rear motor mount has a gusset. It's the only frame modification Team Kawasaki does to Lawson's bike. We did the same thing to ours."

There was silence as I boarded the bike. I turned the key, and pushed the electric start button. Nothing. More silence. They screwed up something, I thought. Bush half-apologized: "I removed the AC generator just for today's track testing. There's no electric starter." He pointed to the left engine case, and in place of the bulbous cover was a flat stub-plate for additional cornering clearance. I nodded, and they pushed me for a bump-start.

The engine coughed, then fired up. The collector boomed loudly, and as I acceler-

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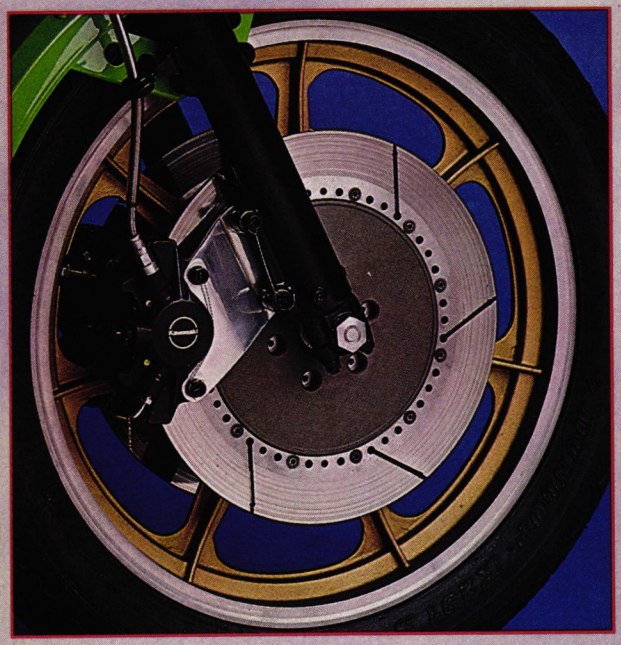
© 1982 PAUL DEAN

Gingerelli hangs on to the Stage Two while fantasizing at Willow Springs

By any other name he's Walter Mitty doing the Eddie Lawson shuffle.

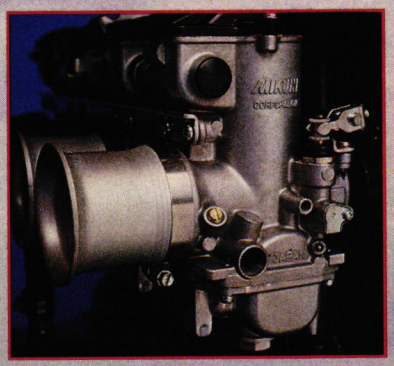


Big KR500 rotors mounted to the Morris WM4 wheel

They'll stop at nothing to get you stopped.

Cal-Fab swingarm joins rear wheel to frame

And to the right is the Kerker KR boom-box.



33mm Mikuni smoothbore

Velocity stack for extra velocity.

ated from the pits, the front end searched for the sky. Just like a Superbike, I thought, then hung on and whistled the engine to 10,000 rpm. After a couple of introductory laps, I blasted down the front straight for a fast lap. I shifted into fifth just past the Start/Finish, and the tach needle crept to 9000 before I had to shut off for Turn One. The DOT-approved speedometer acted dumbfounded, wondering where to go after the needle pointed to 85. I later found that 9000 rpm in fifth was 144 mph. If the straight had been long enough, the Stage Two bike would have wound to 10,000: 161 mph.

Turn One quickly filled the clear screen. Two whacks of the throttle and I was in third. One is a tough turn, and you have to brake gently in order to pinpoint the apex in the bowl to set up for the high-speed exit. I eased pressure on the brake lever with two fingers, feeling the pucks grab the KR rotors. Everything seemed in order, when suddenly the turn looked far away. I had braked too hard, underestimating the ferocious stopping power of the KR brakes. Embarrassed, I accelerated to catch up with the turn. It's the same mistake I made several times on Freddie Spencer's Honda Superbike when I rode it at Willow two years ago. Superbikes demand precision, and the Stage Two bike is no exception.

Turn Two is the fun section of Willow. It's an uphill righthand sweeper that bottoms the bike's suspension. It's a fast turn—third gear on the Stage Two. The fun part is clipping the apex at the crest of the hill. The turn's radius tightens, then unravels for the short-chute to Turn Three, and you can come out of the corner hard on the throttle. During one Perfect Lap I spurred the 125 horses out of Two, and the bike responded, lifting the front tire. And for that moment, as I edged to the left side of the track with Turn Three in my sights, I felt

like Eddie Lawson. There's no other feeling quite like it.

The fantasy was tarnished by Turn Eight, though. It's the equalizer at Willow Springs. The bike had tracked through the other turns smoothly, but Eight was different. It's the fastest turn on the course, and its bumpy surface demands complete attention from a rider and excellent suspension from a bike. Members of the Kawasaki roadrace team had warned us that Eight could present trouble. And it did, in the form of a wobble. We suspected the wobble originated from the rear suspension: The damping wasn't ideally matched to the springs.

But that didn't stop our fun. Wiggle or not, Stage Two brought us into the world of Eddie Lawson. It completed our two-stage journey with the KZ1000R, a bike we consider a benchmark in replica-think. We see the project this way: If you count Stage One as the bike Eddie Lawson would ride *to* work, you could figure that Stage Two is not too far off from the one he rides *at* work. ●

The Superbiker's Shopping List

STAGE ONE

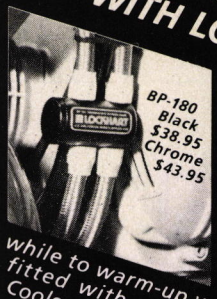
- **Pistons**
  Wiseco Piston Inc.
  7201 Industrial Park Blvd.
  Mentor, OH 44060
- **Cams**
  Web-Cam
  1663 Superior Ave.
  Costa Mesa, CA 92627
- **Carburetors**
  Mikuni American Corp.
  8910 Mikuni Ave.
  Northridge, CA 91324
- **Air filters**
  K&N Engineering Inc.
  P.O. Box 1329
  Riverside, CA 92502
- **Valve springs**
  Hypercycle
  15828 Arminta, Unit 11
  Van Nuys, CA 91406
- **Shocks**
  Works Performance Shocks
  8730 Shirley St.
  Northridge, CA 91324
- **Brake lines**
  Russell Performance
  20420 S. Susana Rd.
  Carson, CA 90745
- **Gaskets**
  IBCO Inc.
  1429 W. 16th St.
  Long Beach, CA 90813
- **Tires**
  Berliner Motor Corp.
  Railroad St. and Plant Rd.
  Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604

STAGE TWO

- **Pistons**
  Wiseco Piston Inc.
  7201 Industrial Park Blvd.
  Mentor, OH 44060
- **Cams and valve springs**
  Andrews Products Inc.
  5212 N. Shapland
  Rosemont, IL 60018
- **Porting**
  PMC Race Equips
  3700 S. High
  Oklahoma City, OK 73129
- **Swingarm**
  Cal-Fab Inc.
  5443 E. La Palma Ave.
  Anaheim, CA 92807
- **Mag wheels**
  Performance Machine
  15520 Illinois Ave.
  Paramount, CA 90723
- **Shocks**
  Works Performance Shocks
  8730 Shirley St.
  Northridge, CA 91324
- **Carbs**
  Mikuni American Corp.
  8910 Mikuni Ave.
  Northridge, CA 91324
- **Brakes**
  Kawasaki Motors Corp.
  2009 E. Edinger Ave.
  Santa Ana, CA 92711
- **Tires**
  Dunlop Tire and Rubber Corp.
  P.O. Box 1109
  Buffalo, NY 14240

CYCLE GUIDE wishes to thank Kerker Exhaust Systems, without whose help the KZ1000R project would have been impossible.

BIKES & BODIES WARM -UP WITH LOCKHART!!



Summer's gone, but there are still plenty of riding days left before it's time to lock the bike up for winter. On these cold mornings it can take quite a while to warm-up your machine if it's fitted with a "Non-Automatic" Oil Cooler. Lockhart's BP-180 is designed to turn your oil cooler On and Off— providing complete all-weather temperature control.

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GUIDE LINES

Cycle Guide's Monthly Chronicle of Scoops, Tips, Rumors and Hard Facts

BY JOE KRESS

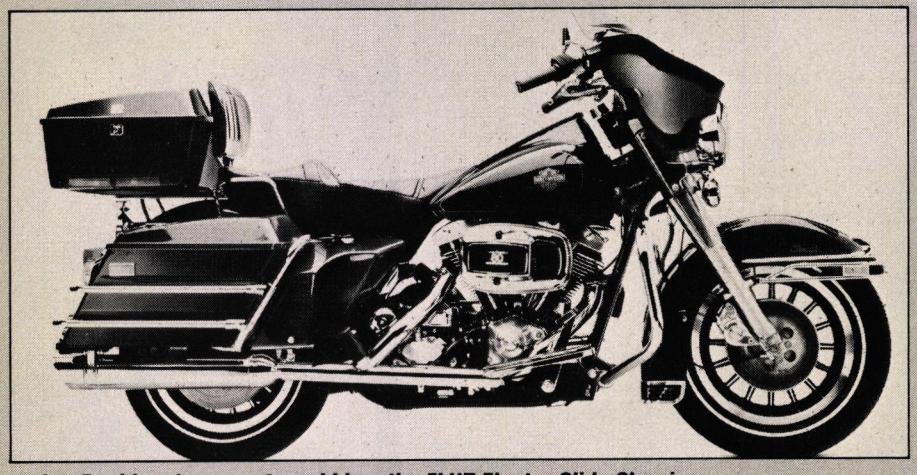
COMING SOON

• First out of the blocks for '83 is the Motor Company, with 11 versions of rolling Milwaukee Thunder. The newest model from H-D is the FLHT Electra Glide, a machine combining the traditional looks of the FLH with the more-advanced technology of the FLT. The new bike has a fork-mounted Electra Glide-type fairing and windshield along with a five-gallon Fat Bob tank mounted on an FLT-style frame, with a three-point elastomer engine-mount and five-speed transmission. The FLHT is available in standard Electra Glide or Classic form. The Classic model includes a Tour Pak and backrest.

• The new FLHT doesn't mean a phase-out of the FLH; it's still in the lineup for '83. But while the newest Electra Glide, the FLHT, uses the FLT-like enclosed chain drive and five-speed transmission, the '83 FLH retains its four-speed gearbox, and is now offered only with belt final drive. A new feature on the FLH, though, and something used throughout the '83 Harley line, is an automotive-style spin-on oil filter.

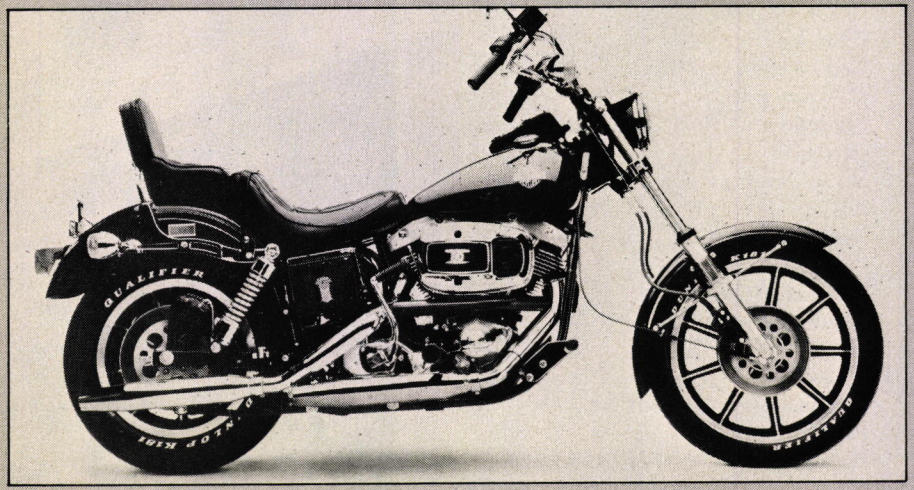
• Top of the line for over-the-road Harleys is still the FLT Tour Glide Classic. The '83 version has a number of refinements, among them adjustable footboards and a redesigned seat that is lower and has more passenger room than before. Other changes include a vented rear fender, designed to improve air flow and extract heat from the rider and passenger area. The FLT, like the Electra Glide, is available either in standard or Classic trim.

• New in the FX series is the Belt-Drive Low Rider, the FXSB. For '83 the consummate factory chopper has Harley's twin-belt system; pri-



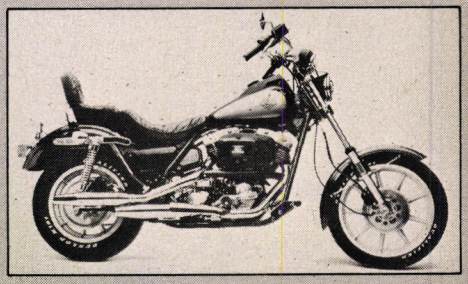
Harley-Davidson's newest road king, the FLHT Electra Glide Classic

A tourer molded in American-traditional.



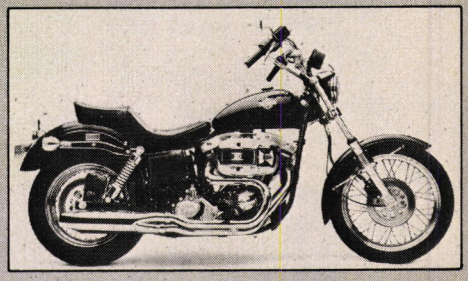
Newest FX: The Belt-Drive Low Rider

Aramid-fiber drive for the mean-streets machine.



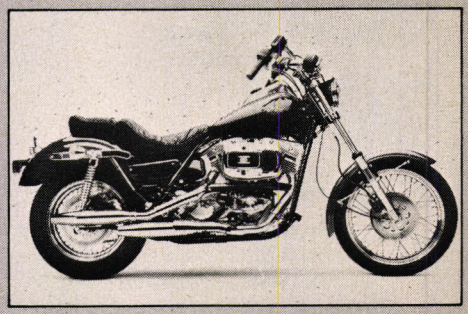
FXRS Super Glide II gets extra flash

With either solid or two-tone paint.



Inbred FXE Super Glide

A Sportster-Electra Glide hybrid.



Traditionally Harley-D, the FXR

Unchanged for 1983.

mary and final drives both are by aramid-fiber belts. The Low Rider's engine comes with plenty of flash, both on and around it, and the 80-inch twin has both electric and kickstart systems.

• The Wide Glide is back for '83, complete with 21-inch, spoked front wheel, extended fork and a pullback handlebar mounted on a three-inch riser. The Glide also has a five-gallon Fat Bob tank, shorty duals, forward pegs and a bobbed rear fender. The Wide Glide, like the Low Rider, incorporates a kickstarter in addition to its electric-start system.

• The bike that launched the entire Super Glide series back in '71—the FXE—with its mating of big-inch Electra Glide power and Sportster-like looks is back for '83. The machine still has spoked wheels and a two-into-one collector exhaust, along with quartz-halogen lighting and a claimed highway mpg rating of 51.

• The FXR and the FXRS, introduced in '82, are mostly unchanged for 1983. Both machines have their 80-inch engines rubber-mounted and both bikes use five-speed gearboxes. The FXR is the more traditional of the two, with spoked wheels and a lower-rise handlebar, while the FXRS is pure custom, featuring mag-style wheels, a padded sissybar and a color choice of either solid black with gold pinstriping or a two-tone finish of indigo blue and pewter.

• The Sportster line has been expanded to three models for '83, the newest being the XLX-61, a machine you've already read about (Coming Soon, September 1982). That stripped-down streetfighter seems destined to steal the thunder in the Sportster lineup, but the other two XLs have had some changes this year, too. All Sportsters now use the old-style, less-restrictive shorty-dual exhaust, along with a smaller, oval-shaped air filter. The '83 XLs also have a new, two-stage ignition advance, allowing a bump in compression up to 8.8:1.

• The Roadster model, designated XLS, has a radically different look for '83. Gone is the extended fork of the '82 model, something that should greatly improve handling. But that's far from being the only change on the bike; the XLS now mounts a Fat Bob tank and a pullback handlebar on a three-inch riser for a look more Big Twin than Sportster. The Roadster uses cast, mag-type wheels and its tachometer is mounted in a separate tank pod while the speedometer is up on the bar.

• The standard-model Sportster, the XLH, also has a new look for '83. The bike has a simple, uncluttered profile, largely due to the additon of a new, FXE-style gas tank. Other styling changes on the XLH include a new seat and a ribbed primary cover.

• Cosmopolitan Motors Inc. now is offering something about as far removed from the Milwaukee state of mind as possible—Bimotas. The Hatboro, Pennsylvania firm has become the sole U.S. agent for Bimota S.p.A., importing bikes such as the SB3, a custom chromoly frame wrapped around a Suzuki GS1000 engine. Suspension on the SB3 is Marzocchi at the front with a deCarbon monoshock for the rear, with magnesium wheels by Campagnolo, perforated discs by Brembo and V-rated tires from Michelin. Total weight of the Italian machine is a mere 444 pounds and its claimed top speed is 143 mph.

• Another Italian manufacturer, Ducati, has just introduced a new model, the 900 S2 Desmo. The 90-degree vee-twin has a 9.5:1 compression ratio and puts out a claimed 72 horsepower at 7500 rpm. Valve operation is SOHC and, of course, desmodromic. Fuel is passed through 40mm Dell'Ortos and the ignition is by a Bosch BTZ electronic unit.

• Benelli is back in the U.S. Maserati Automobiles Inc., under its subsidiary Benelli North America, is importing the bikes. The first model to receive federal emissions certification is the 900 Sei, an inline six-cylinder sportbike. The 900 is an 80-horsepower machine with a five-speed transmission and duplex-chain final drive. The brakes on the Benelli utilize a patented integral system, with one of the front discs linked to the rear brake by a common master cylinder. The other front brake disc is controlled separately. The 900 Sei should retail for $5406.

• From one extreme to the other, from 900cc to 50. Fantic Motor's newest bike, the Trailmatic, was designed specifically for the U.S. market and has belt primary drive, an automatic clutch

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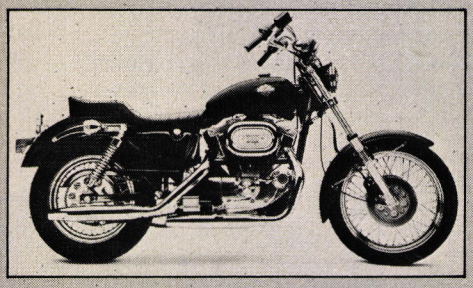
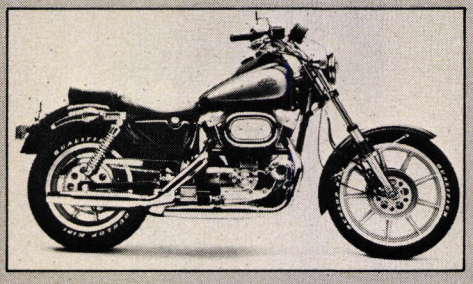


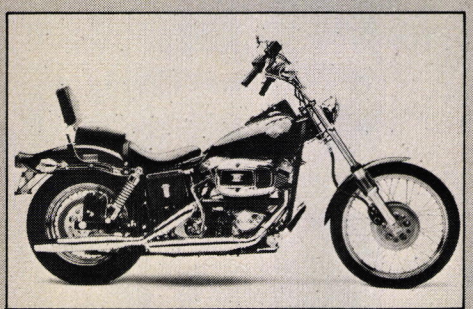
Standard Sportster gets a facelift

Courtesy of the FXE-style gas tank.



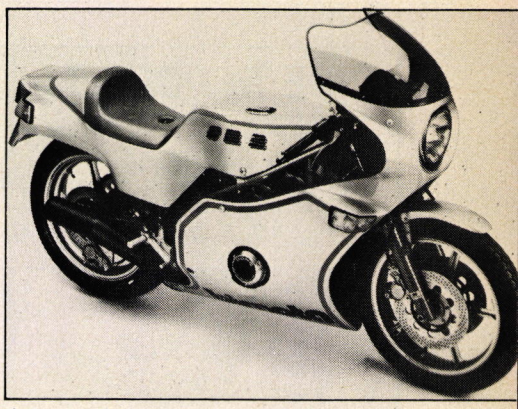
XLS Roadster loses its extended fork

And gains a Fat Bob tank.



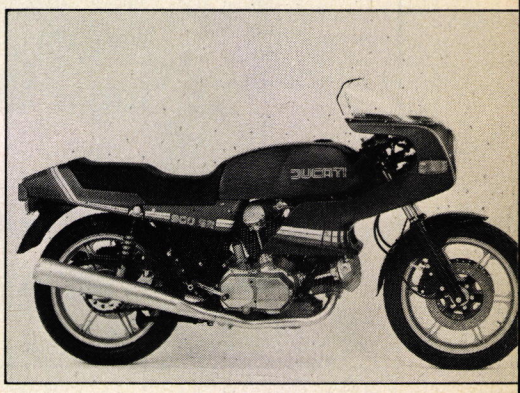
FXWG Wide Glide cruises into 1983

Still on a 21-inch front wheel.



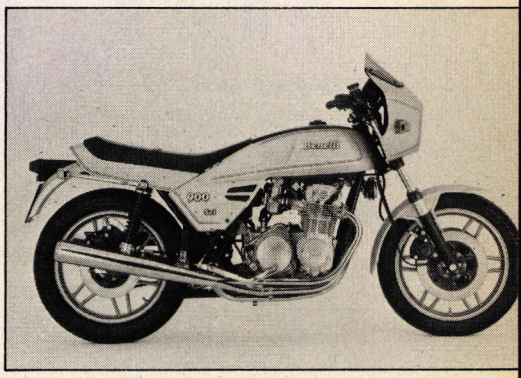
Bimota SB3, imported by Cosmopolitan

Italian iron for American curves.



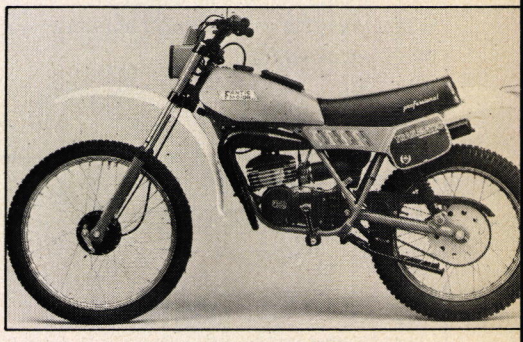
Ducati's new desmo has the numbers

Like 72 horsepower from the 900 S2.



Benelli's Sei is back in the U.S.A.

Now imported by Maserati.



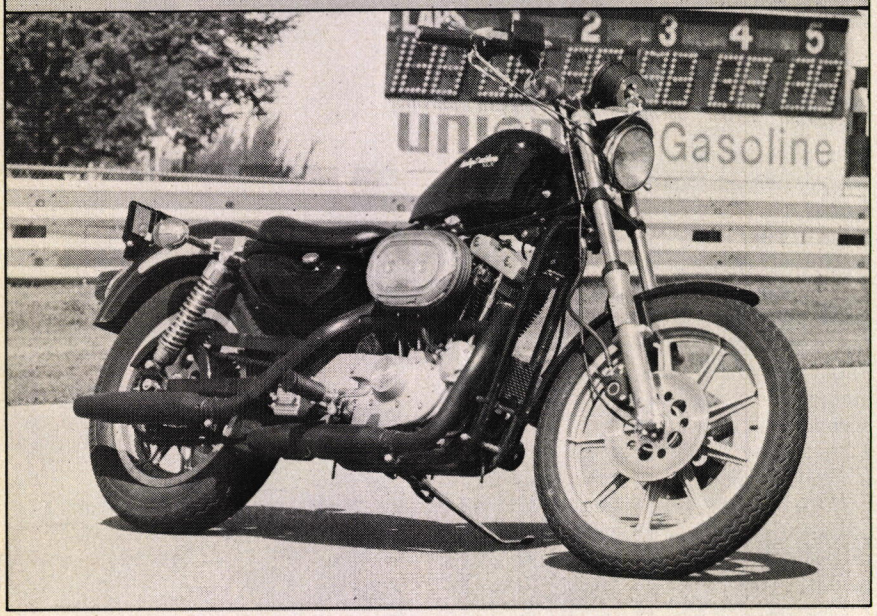
Pedal-power Fantic Trailmatic 50

Designed specifically for the U.S.

RIDE/REPORT:

Harley-Davidson XLX

Dressed-down elegance in basic black.



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 LARRY WORKS

• Take one Sportster, boil it down until every ounce of frippery has melted off and you'll have produced what Harley-Davidson did for 1983: the XLX.

This newest Sportster will make up a large segment of Harley's Sportster production, which might seem a gamble in a first-year model, but the XLX promises to be a safe bet. In the short time since the XLX's introduction, it's developed a certain cult status, and the reasons why are as simple as its clean, spare lines: The XLX is an unadulterated motorcycle. You won't find any doodads or gimcracks anywhere on it. From the single gauge—a speedometer—nestled in the black, wrinkle-finish instrument case on the handlebar, to the low solo saddle, the XLX is the product of an undiluted concept; defiant, bold and unmistakably *not* a compromise of the sort that committees are heir to.

What committee would have committed to the peanut fuel tank, flattrack-inspired handlebar and dual shorty mufflers? And how many committees would have stood firm on the XLX's paint scheme—any color you want so long as it's black? And even if the XLX's stylistic considerations didn't cause a boardroom stir, what committee could have left well enough alone to underwrite a 998cc street bike so stripped of accessories that it weighs in dry at 486 pounds? Only a

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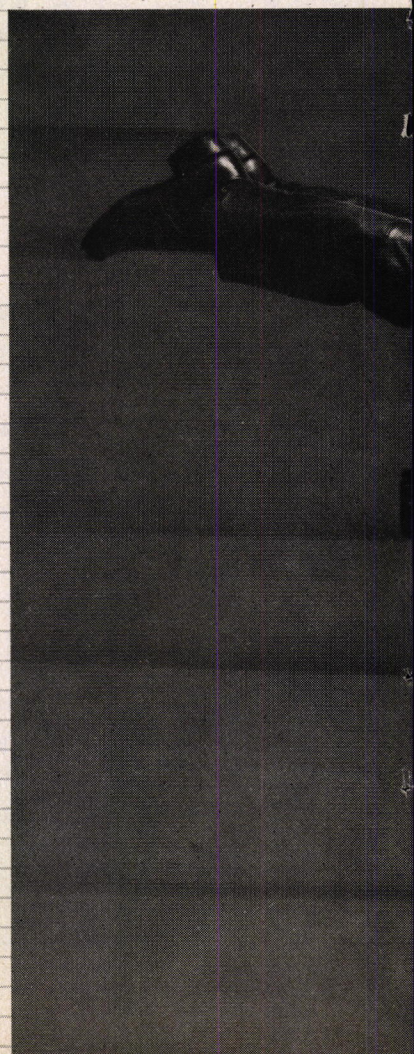

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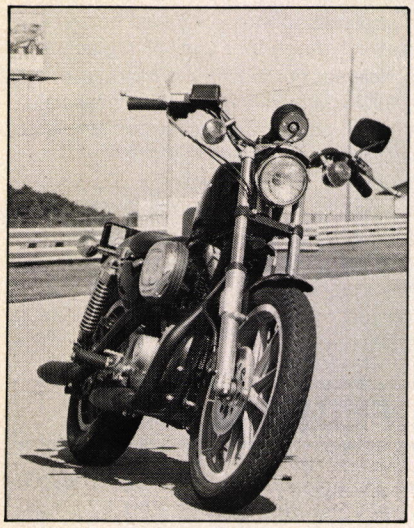

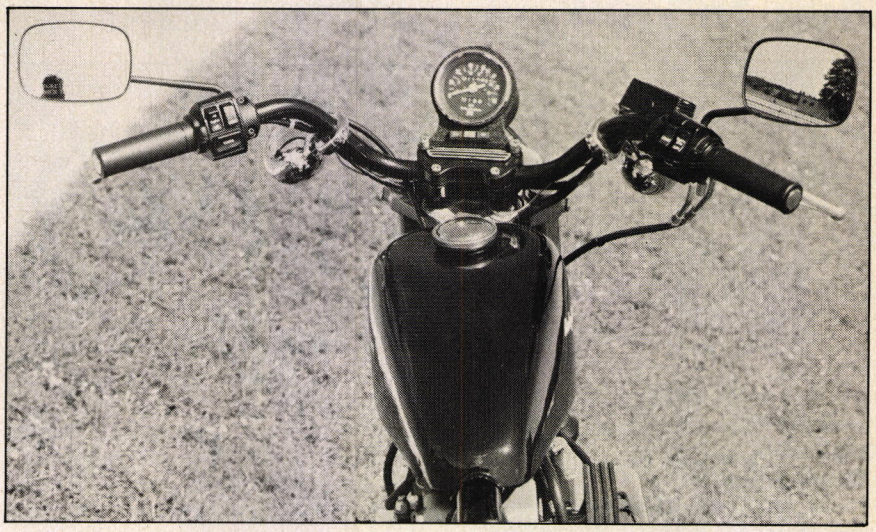

committee of one.

Like all of the '83 Sportsters, the XLX has a compression ratio upped to 8.8:1, aided by Harley's V-Fire III ignition, a vacuum-switch-controlled, two-stage ignition advance. H-D claims a 10 percent increase in "usable" horsepower over last year's Sportsters as a result. However you define "usable," the XLX still pulls through its four-speed gearbox more easily than Sportsters of the past few years.

And it is at speed that the XLX continues to put distance between itself and previous Sportsters. The low, wide handlebar offers plenty of leverage, while the H-D vee contributes to a low cg (XLX seat height is only 29 inches), making for easy side-to-side transitions. The XLX's fork reacts well to jolts, but the shocks are slightly off, being a bit underdamped/oversprung. The solo saddle looks menacing enough, but it's surprisingly comfortable—for the distances allowed by the 2.25-gallon fuel tank. You're ready for a bend-and-stretch session when the XLX hits reserve. But long before the seat becomes a limiting factor, you'll notice the Goodyear tires which creep in hard cornering before the limits of ground clearance are met.

In character, the XLX is the distilled essence of Milwaukee motorcycles: long, low and purposeful. By any standards it is a hell of a good Harley. By most standards it is a hell of a good motorcycle. *—Larry Works*

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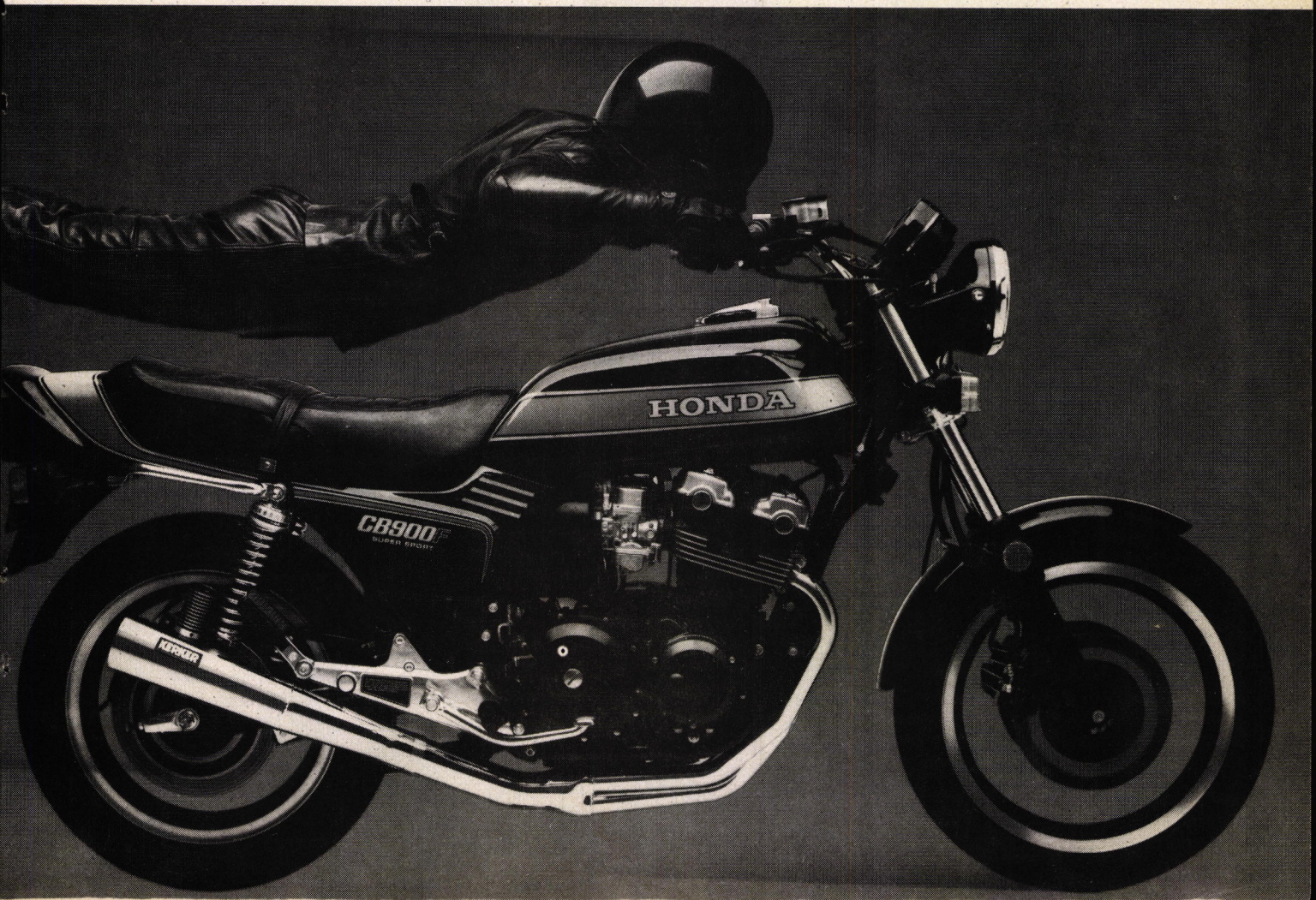


Book Review

GUIDELINES TO GETAWAYS
A Handbook for the Motorcycle Adventurer
By Bruce Kochsmeier
53 pages, $5.95 plus $1 postage
Pacific Motorcycle Adventurers, Inc.
103 Farber Road #7B
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

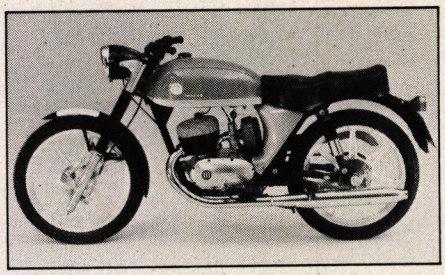
• It doesn't take a full-dresser to tour. In fact, many riders feel a trip with a fully optioned tourer is completely missing the point of motorcycle travel. Bruce Kochsmeier's book, "Guidelines to Getaways," is a mini-manual of this philosophy.

"Guidelines to Getaways" is written in two sections. The first half of the book is virtually a step-by-step planning session for the neophyte bike tourer. Kochsmeier covers everything from initial trip selection, to how to take care of the money, to what to take and what to wear. Old hands might find this tedious reading, but newcomers to motorcycling will find it invaluable.

The second half of Kochsmeier's book will prove a treasure to oldtimers and newcomers alike, especially those planning a tour of California. To make his point that bike travel is best when Interstates are avoided, Kochsmeier maps out a sample tour, using his favorite route circling the state of California. He starts out in San Diego, goes north to Arcata, then down and across the state to Lake Tahoe and into the Yosemite area. Still shunning the Interstates, "Guidelines to Getaways" continues on through the desert Southwest, all the while pointing out interesting sights or places to stop and visit.

And that, actually, is the central theme of this book: Take the time to enjoy a motorcycle tour, don't just rack up miles. Kochsmeier feels that far too many people who buy motorcycles fail to exploit the potential available and ultimately lose interest in motorcycling. "Guidelines to Getaways" is meant to put focus and direction into motorcycle touring, bringing fun into it. And in that context the book works—on two levels. The first section assures the beginner that his 450cc commuter bike is a perfectly adequate touring mount, while the second half of the book is enough to start the wanderlust juices flowing in even the crustiest seasoned pro. *—Joe Kress*

and an automatic variable-speed final drive. The Trailmatic has an 11.0:1 compression ratio and is fired by an electronic ignition system.



Montesa resurrects the Impala 2

Taking a journey through the past.

• Finally, Montesa is introducing the Impala 2. Reintroducing is more like it, though, because the Impala 2, with the exception of its alloy wheels, is offered *exactly* as it was in 1962. The classic two-stroke single from the Sixties is expected to sell very well in Spain, where there still is an avid Impala Club. *—Joe Kress*

HARD CASH

• With Can-Am's recent move from its Valcourt, Quebec facilities, there was speculation that Bombardier Inc., which had built Can-Ams in Quebec since 1972, was getting out of motorcycle production. Nothing could be further from the truth. Jean-Paul Groulx, Can-Am's vice president for sales, has announced that, starting with the 1983 models, Can-Am motorcycles will be manufactured for Bombardier by Armstrong Competition Motorcycles, a division of the English firm Armstrong Equipment Ltd. Under the new contract, six new-model Can-Ams soon will be arriving for sale in the U.S. and Canada. The '83 lineup will include four motocross machines, a trials bike and a 250cc roadracer. In overall concept, Groulx says, the new Can-Ams represent a joint design effort between Armstrong and Bombardier. Can-Am R&D, the Bombardier department that moved overseas, prompting the speculation about the company abandoning motorcycles in the first place, now will be housed at Bombardier's wholly owned subsidiary, Bombardier-Rotax Engines of Gunskirchen, Austria.

• The assets of Hesketh Motorcycles have gone under the auctioneer's gavel. Twenty-one bikes were offered for sale, along with an additional nine road-test models. In the six months that Hesketh was building and selling motorcycles, 130 machines were produced.

• Yamaha, however, has fared slightly better over the years. The first Yamaha came off the line on February 5, 1955 (a 125cc YA1), and on February 10th of this year the 20-millionth machine was completed. That milestone motorcycle was an XZ550 Vision.

• Speaking of production runs in the millions, last year manufacturers in Italy combined to produce 3.3 million helmets. And it isn't that Italians are more safety-conscious than most, either—2.8 million of those helmets were exported.

• But even numbers like those aren't enough to make helmets the top-of-the-list best-selling accessory—that honor goes to replacement tires. Helmets, however, are in the number-two slot, followed by oils and lubes, faceshields, chain lube, chains, exhaust systems, fairings, gloves and windshields.

• Still on the subject of sales, if you have recently bought a new motorcycle, chances are that it wasn't your first bike. According to recent studies, 86 percent of all new motorcycles are sold to experienced riders, and of those riders, 47 percent were males between the ages of 26 and 30. *—Joe Kress*

FEDERAL CASES

• Are you a rider who enjoys musical accompaniment on your trips? Well, if that's the case, you had better get out your maps and replan your journey to avoid New York. If that state's Senate Bill S8325 passes into law, wearing headphones while operating any motor vehicle will become illegal.

• And while you're at it you might have to look for a detour around Chicago, too. The council members of the Windy City want to make sure the only thing you hear when you're driving or riding a motor vehicle is just that, the wind. Amended Section 297 of the city charter seeks to ban the use of headphones while driving or riding on Chicago streets.

• Pennsylvania, on the other hand, might be boogie heaven. While New York and Chicago hope to outlaw headphone use on bikes or in cars, Pennsylvania plans to allow it; House Bill H1853, if passed, would see to that.

• Meanwhile, the Mississippi legislature, with Senate Bill S2092, is at once both skirting an issue and taking a step in the right direction. The 55-mph national speed limit is infrequently observed, and most lawmakers know that. But those same lawmakers realize that if they want to continue receiving federal highway funds they have to enforce the federally mandated double nickel. Mississippi's proposed legislation gets around the dilemma by adhering to the letter of the federal speed limit and at the same time ignoring it; the penalty for anyone caught traveling up to 70 mph on a Mississippi highway with four or more lanes would be $1.

• This bill concerns age, not speed. If you're in the habit of packing Junior along when you ride down to the store for a quart of milk, you might have to change your ways—if you live in Connecticut, that is. House Bill H5409, if passed, would make it illegal for anyone under the age of 16 to be a passenger on a motorcycle.

• Finally, more on helmet-law legislation. The battle cry of the abolitionists, "Let those who ride decide," apparently hasn't been falling on deaf ears; between 1976 and 1980, 28 states have either repealed or weakened existing helmet-use legislation. Currently there are nine states with helmet-repeal laws in some phase of enactment. On the other side of the argument, however, six states have proposals pending to instate helmet laws. *—Joe Kress*

RUMORS

• With new-model introductions coming up, speculation is flying fast and furious. Starting with Honda, it appears that, while the VT250 probably won't make it into this country, something a little bigger might. Our factory insiders tell us that something could be a VT500E, a liquid-cooled, 52-degree vee-twin with three valves and two sparkplugs per cylinder.

• Those same sources say twin-plug heads might show up on other Honda streetbikes, too. Like maybe on a CX650.

• And while we're thinking about 650cc Hondas, let's think turbocharging. Overseas informants suggest that you shouldn't be too surprised if the CXT500 grows into a CXT650 for '83.

• So far we've been talking about the vee-twin engine configuration, but our agents in Japan say Honda might have something a little stranger yet. What would you think of a street-legal, liquid-cooled, two-stroke vee-three? Go ahead and call it the MBX250 if you like.

• Liquid-cooling is a good possibility for BMW's latest bike, too. And according to our German sources, the cooling medium might not be the only thing new from Bavaria, either. Parting with 60 years of tradition, BMW's '83 1000cc streetbike is likely to show up with an all-new engine: an inline four with Bosch L-Jetronic fuel injection. Also, the new BMW probably will be bigger than previous models—certainly longer. And the German connection hints that the rear suspension just might be a single-strut system similar to that on the R80 G/S.

• And speaking of that R80, it could be BMW's largest-displacement boxer twin, *if* the company ceases production of its 1000cc flat twin. Our German informants speculate that the R80 might end up as a pure-sport streetbike, to be called the R80ST.

• 1983 looks to shape up as an interesting year for engines, and word from Europe has it that Honda and BMW might not be alone in the new-engine arena. Our sources say that Moto-Guzzi is likely to join in with a new 850cc four-valve vee-twin. And as an extra touch for the bike, look for anti-dive on the front fork.

• And on the subject of Italian motorcycles, our men in Europe say don't pass over Ducati. That pure-sport marque very possibly could be getting ready to enter the touring field with a 600cc machine replete with a small fairing and saddlebags as standard equipment.

• Don't for a minute think that Ducati is abandoning the sport field, however. European information tells us that company just might have an all-new engine to play with. The newest Ducati, they say, is likely to follow the latest engine configuration craze, the vee-four, but the Italian firm might well put a little spin on the ball. Speculation is strong that a new Ducati SOHC vee-four could have, instead of plain liquid-cooled barrels, an oil-cooled system. The word is that it might function with oil jackets surrounding the cylinders, while the head remains air-cooled.

• We hate to sound redundant, but we have to pass on this information. Laverda, long noted

Continued

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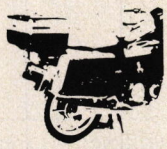

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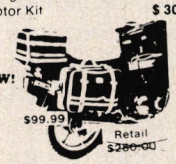

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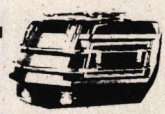

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for its triples, is said to be readying its first-ever four, a 750cc liquid-cooled transverse design. Transatlantic phone conversations imply that Laverda's new four might have electronic fuel injection and, with the alternator possibly mounted behind the cylinder bank, it could be a narrow engine, too. There is even a chance that a 500cc version will become available, as well.

• Electronic fuel injection might become part of Yamaha's lineup for '83, too. Insiders at the factory tell us an injected XJ900 could lead the way.

• And following close behind, they hint, might be an XJ750 looking very much like this year's Turbo Seca, but without the turbo and with fuel injectors nestled behind the bodywork.

• Still concentrating on Yamahas, think back a few months to the rumor about that company's '83 vee four, the Double Vision. Now think about options in the class of those offered on Honda's Aspencade and looks reminiscent of a CXT500 Honda, add some modular luggage and you could be visualizing Yamaha's 1983 flagship tourer. *–Joe Kress*

APART FROM THE CROWD

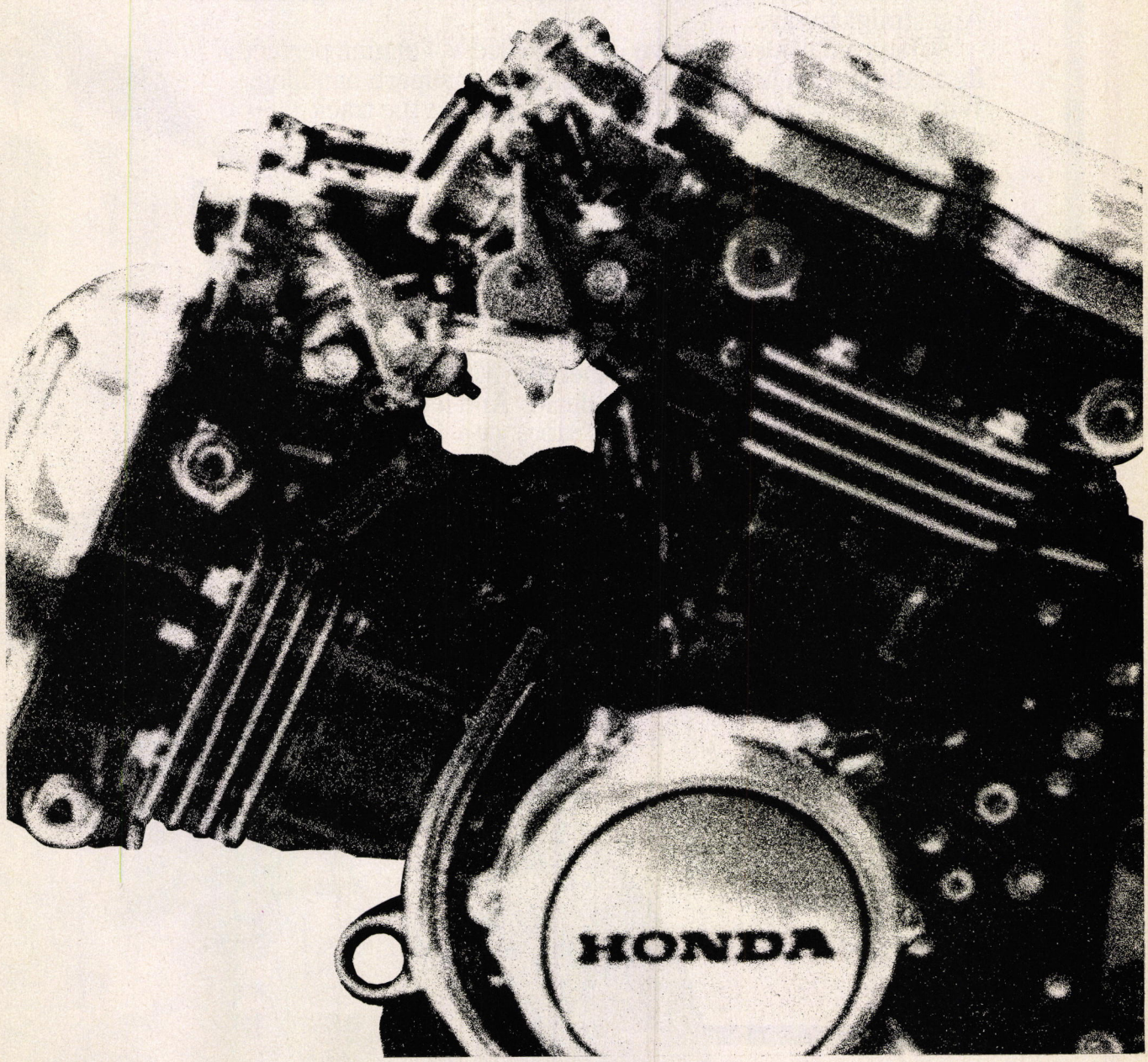
• Do you know where your motorcycle is right now? It might sound silly, but it could be worth your while to put this magazine down for a minute and go out to the garage and check. According to national statistics, 100,000 bikes are stolen each year.

• Here's a story about motorcycles and small boys, and while it demonstrates the potential of off-road bikes, it also qualifies as Stranger Than Fiction. A pair of Spanish trials riders were plonking through the hills practicing their moves when they came upon a young boy, Roberto Medina of Leon, who had been lost in the rugged mountains for *three* years. Medina somehow had survived on his own in the wilderness for all that time, but when the two trials riders found him, their bikes being the only machines able to negotiate the craggy terrain the boy had wandered into, the first thing he asked for was food. Now *that's* understandable.

• Liquid-cooling, automotive-style, has made tremendous inroads into motorcycling and it now appears truck technology will be next. Futuridea S.p.A., an Italian firm, reportedly is planning a diesel-powered motorcycle. A 1.8-liter Fiat 127 four-cylinder engine will be shoehorned into a bike frame, with the result offered in Standard, Delux or Sport trim.

• On a closing note, how about a look at a high-performance possibility of the future? According to European reports, the U.S. version of the CXT500 Honda is an "old dog" compared to the overseas-model bike. The difference, they say, is due to a change in computer chips. So how is this a look at futuristic high performance? Well, with more and more machines going to black-box technology, it doesn't seem too far-fetched to envision a rider of the future going to his dealer for a Stage III hop-up kit–and returning home with a single computer chip in a velvet-lined case. *–Joe Kress* •

WHAT DO MIKE BALDWIN AND THE NEW HONDA V-4 HAVE IN COMMON?



Mike Baldwin captures U.S. Road Racing Championship aboard V-45

A CHAMP

Playing matchmaker is a tricky business. But it really worked out well when we dressed our new 1023cc Sabre-based V-4 engine in a Formula One chassis and introduced it to Mike Baldwin.

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Of course, Mike's still allowed to see other bikes. Like the CB900F-based Superbike that he rode to victory the same weekend.

So if you're looking for a partner like Mike's, we suggest you see your Honda dealer. And let him fix you up with either a V-45 Sabre™ or a V-45 Magna™.

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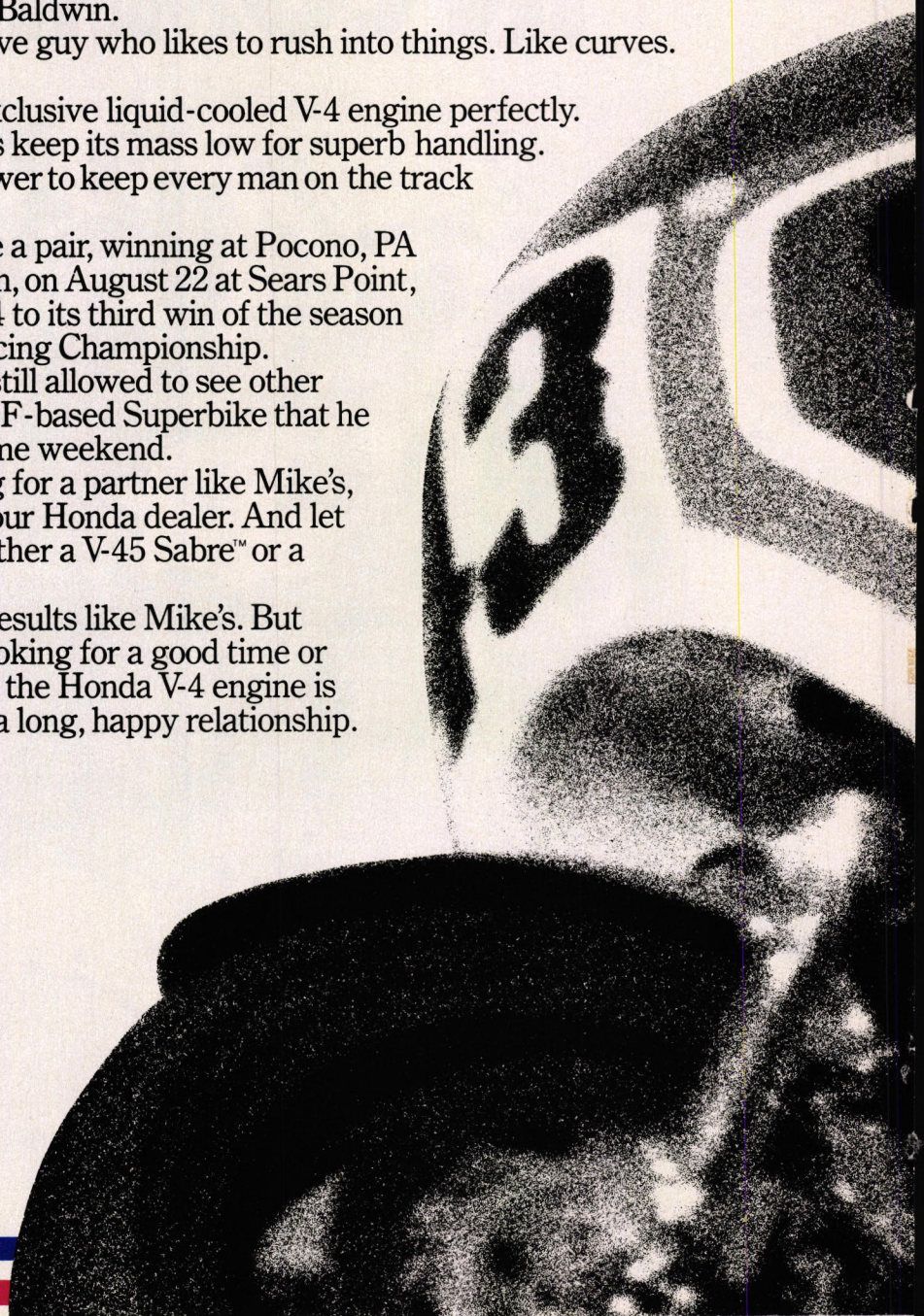

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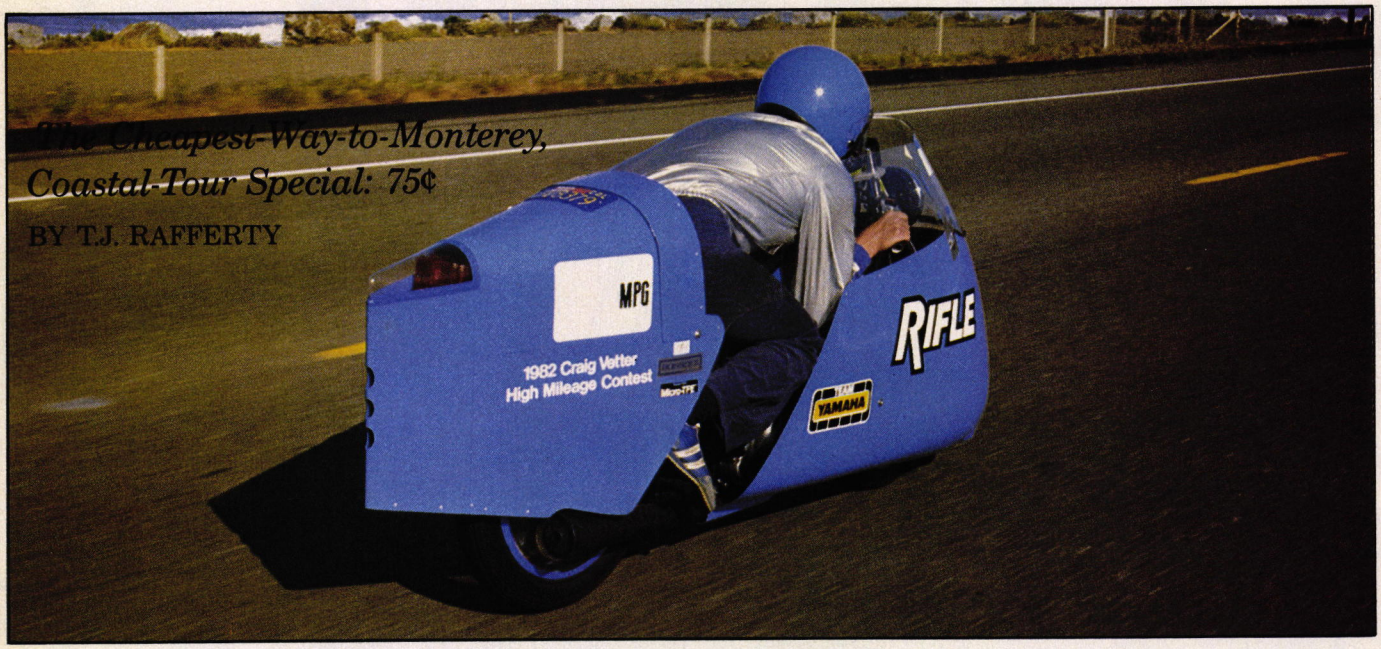
BREAKING WIND:

Craig Vetter High-Mileage Contest



The Cheapest-Way-to-Monterey, Coastal-Tour Special: 75¢

BY T.J. RAFFERTY

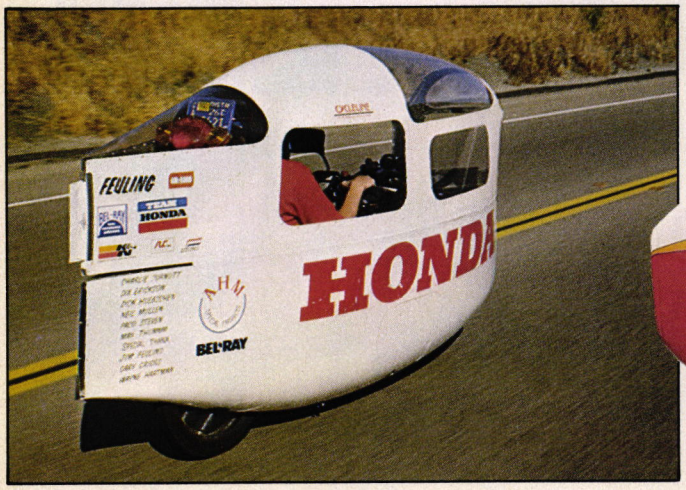
PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 T.J. RAFFERTY

• Motorcycle fuel economy hasn't exactly been a priority concern among manufacturers or consumers. When the first energy crunch hit in 1973, there was no rush to replace the Pontiac with a Yamaha. The alternative was more likely to be a Toyota, because transportation here has more often than not meant automobiles, at least since Henry Ford put the motorcycle industry on waivers around 1915. Instead, motorcycles developed in the recreational mode, and since we have long been willing to spend grandly for our fun, there was no need for our two-wheelers to be fuel-misers.

Among the motorcycle-industry heavies in this country, Craig Vetter is one of the few who reject that rationale and seek to change it. Whether a bike is used for touring, commuting or cruising the boulevard, he sees no reason why it should deliver worse fuel mileage than an econo-sedan. And his beliefs have taken shape as an annual high-mileage contest.

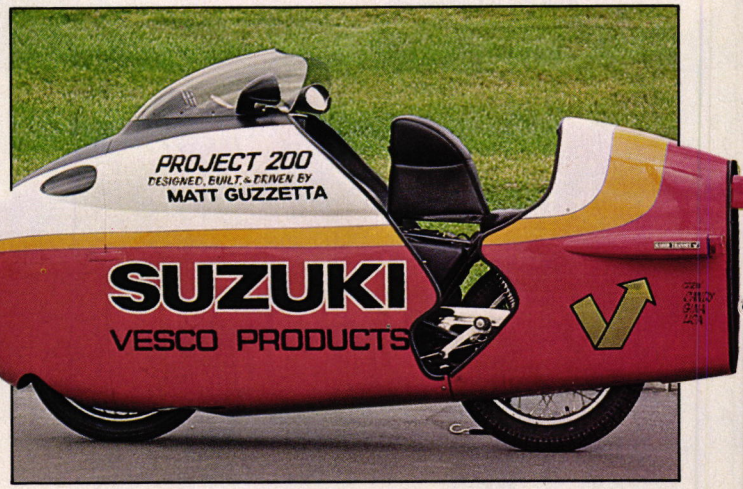
Craig Vetter sold his successful fairing company in 1978 and began to apply the "do more with less" design philosophy he learned 15 years earlier from Buckminster Fuller. Among the hardware which emerged from his shop was a streamlined touring motorcycle based on the Kawasaki KZ250. And, in order to promote economy-consciousness, he organized mileage events within the annual Vetter Rally; contests that were loose on rules and long on fun, but still motivated by serious concerns.

In 1981, with support from the Central Coast Motorcycle Association, Vetter held his first national event in San Luis Obispo, California. Among the giants, only American Honda had an official entry, but Kawasaki was represented by Vetter's prototype, and Yamaha had observers on



Honda 'liner with its observation-car canopy

The slab-sided approach didn't work.



Suzuki's GN125 had the look of big numbers

But the wind held it to just 152 mpg.

hand. The Honda, a radically modified and fully streamlined SL125, was a showcase of pure aerodynamics, but problems with pilot visibility and low-speed handling put it out of contention. The remaining handful of independent streamliners suffered various problems and the industry trophy went to the *Cycle World* Honda Passport, with 198 mpg.

The production class, however, held more surprises. The $300 first prize was won by Mike Hishiki, who squeezed 189 mpg out of a Honda XL80 and in second, at 147 mpg, was the lightly modified XL250 of Charly Perethian. That finish bought Perethian some leverage with Yamaha, which supplied him with an SR185 Exciter for the 1982 contest.

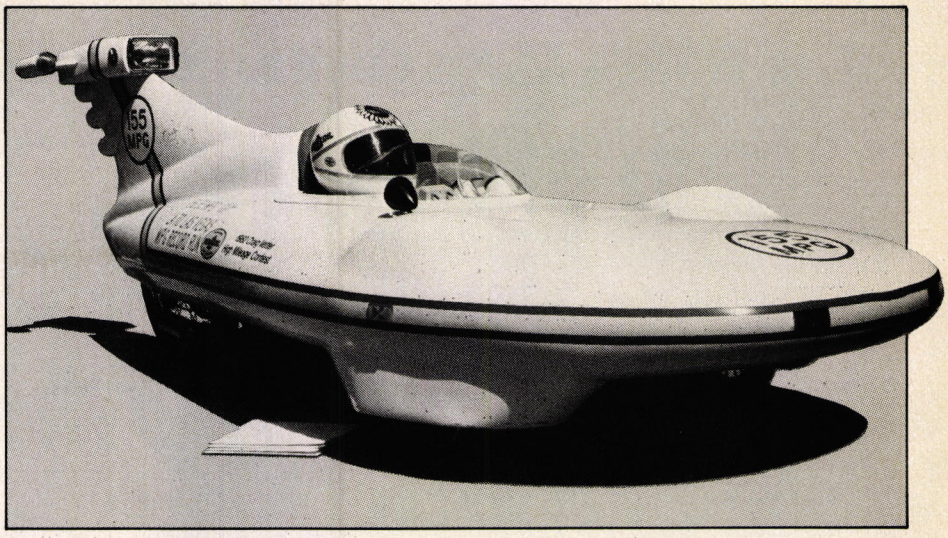
This year things got tougher, and the industry entrants got stronger. Last year it had been only tight, country roads and an easy stretch of coast highway. This year it was 135 miles of coastal Highway One between San Luis Obispo and Carmel, with patches of crumbled sandstone, road repairs, successions of blind turns, and, of course, lines of the ever-present coast-highway campers shuffling snail-like, nose-to-tail.

The coast highway was completed in 1937, and they've been working on it ever since. In places the roadbed sits in narrow chinks, halfway up a 3,000-foot cliff which rises directly from the sea. And sometimes the road just ... goes away, reclaimed by the ocean's own recycling program.

Through the foothills, past Hearst Castle, and into the rising southern edges of the Santa Lucia mountains, things start to get interesting and stay that way. At Ragged Point, 60 miles into the course, the road rises more sharply, the switchbacks tighten up and the road hugs the edge of the continent. Combining speed with sightseeing becomes an exercise in extreme peril.

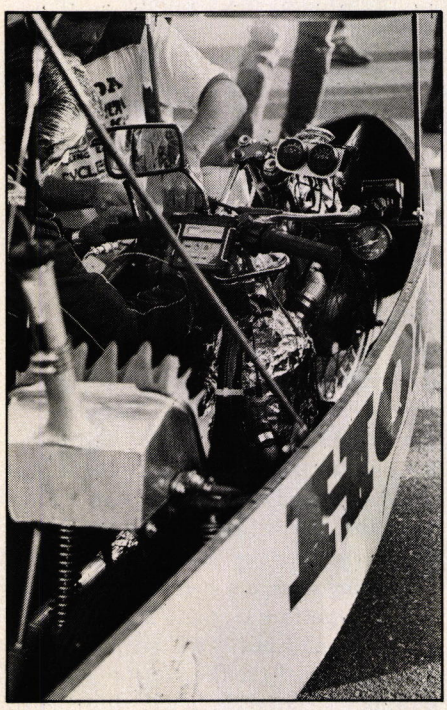
This year American Honda returned with a modified version of its previous entry, featuring more visibility and with retractable foot panels replacing last year's wheeled outriggers. Piloted by Debbie Evans, an accomplished trials rider and movie stuntperson, the Honda looked to be the odds-on favorite. The team came with a complex array of techo-trickery, including two-way radio communication with its support van. Gearing on the Honda was 23 at the countershaft and 28 at the rear.

Another returnee was Dan Hanebrink, with a tidy—and tiny—130-pound streamliner powered by a small four-stroke single he declined to identify. The Suzuki entry, built and ridden by Matt Guzzetta of Vesco products, was a handsomely enclosed GN125. And Doug Malewicki was back with his three-wheeled California Commuter, pushed along by a 360cc Lombardini diesel engine. Filling out the industry class was the Rifle Fairing entry built by Don Zacher and Perethian, the winners. Craig



Doug Malewicki's three-wheeler was back for a second-year attempt

A Lombardini diesel powers the California Commuter.



High-tech Honda entry was a favorite

Complete with radio communication.

Charly Perethian and Craig Vetter: 282 and 108 miles per gallon

With these kinds of numbers there's no need to compare the prices.

The Rifle's Mileage Marksmanship

• The future never really arrives. It would be simply out of character for it to pop in unannounced, like the kid next door. What really happens is the past gradually changes costumes and becomes the present.

In 1957, the last year full dustbin fairings were allowed in Grand Prix road-racing, Moto Guzzi won the 350 world championship. That racer, half-enclosed, was powered by a 350cc single and would pull 145 mph. The bodywork on Charly Perethian's Econo-run-winning Rifle/Yamaha closely resembles the shell on that 25-year-old Italian racer.

Air resistance, or drag, multiplies with the square of any increase in speed; the drag at 80 mph is four times greater than at 40. Horsepower is, naturally, one way to overcome drag, but it must go up at the *cube* of any increase in speed; that is, it takes eight times the power to go 80 mph as it does to go 40. Streamlining, therefore, is a much more efficient means to reduce drag and increase performance.

Perethian hardly fits the profile of the garden-variety privateer. For years he was design chief for the Vetter Corp., and later head of product development. He holds credentials as a tuner and amateur road-racer, as well. Which is to say he's a chronic motorcyclist, and the Rifle econo-cruiser indicates that he knows what he is doing.

The stock Yamaha 185 Exciter he started with produced 65 mpg. Lowering the frame both front and rear brought the profile down, and test runs with the standard motor showed the mileage had increased to 112 mpg.

"We laid out a realistic 23-mile test course," Perethian said. "It had a steep hill, was quite twisty, and half of it was 55 mph running in various wind conditions.

"Fooling around with the gearing bumped it up to 124 mpg, then 132," he said. Then Perethian's team implemented a range of engine modifications, including various cam timings, jetting changes and spark plugs. "Most of the carburetion changes destroyed the engine's low-end response," he said, "and produced worse mileage." The bike was tuned to run at very narrow throttle openings and low rpm, and under those conditions it ran better when jetted rich, and got better mileage, too.

At the finish Perethian is all smiles

282 mpg this year; 400 next.

"Next we started seeing how tall we could gear it," Perethian continued, "and every time we went taller, the mileage increased." It went to 146 first, and finally settled at 166. Then they increased the compression slightly, advanced the ignition timing four degrees, and machined a venturi to fit between the carb and head for better fuel velocity at low throttle openings. And the highest mileage recorded with the bare bike was 182. By this time the weight was just under 200 pounds.

Next came the fairing. "With the bodywork on, but still unpainted," Perethian said, "the mileage *leaped* up to 265!" There might have been more than just aerodynamics at work, though, because with the fairing in place the engine was getting up to temperature.

And there was a dramatic difference in coasting downhill with the fairing on; the bike wanted to *accelerate*. Before the fairing was mounted, Perethian said the machine would get up to 60 mph and wouldn't go any faster; now it went to 70, 75 and kept climbing. It was eerie, he said, with no noise, just *sailing* downhill.

Perethian's fairing design was settled on even before he started building. "We knew if we totally streamlined it the rider might be uncomfortable, or become disoriented if things started to get exciting." Also, he was aware that a fully streamlined body can become unstable, especially if it encounters sidewinds that can create lift.

"So we kept the leg cutouts," Perethian explained, "and I could poke my head up to destroy the aerodynamics if I needed to pull out of a dangerous situation." Since he was riding the machine himself, Perethian put a premium on ridability.

With plastic wheel discs fitted, the fairing painted and the gearing at 17/28, the completed bike weighed 204 pounds. After 36 test runs, the mileage had jumped from 265 mpg to 315. "We knew we were in the hunt," Perethian said.

In the hunt, indeed. The small Rifle Fairing group, a handful of refugees from the old Vetter company, put itself at the leading edge of moto-economy. And they're not through. Perethian said his next project will take on the trailing edge of windcheating design; he plans a tail fairing for street bikes.

After a quarter-century of little development in motorcycle streamlining, something seems to be happening. Again.

—T.J. Rafferty

Vetter rode his luxury-touring KZ250 as a non-entrant.

There were roughly 30 contestants entered in the production classes, and several of the $300 prizes went unclaimed. The cash awards, donated by the major manufacturers and Craig Vetter himself, totaled some $4,000. The money was posted for each winner of the over and under 750cc Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki and Kawasaki classes with like amounts for the top BMW and Harley-Davidson, and for any other brands above and below 499cc. (Vintage Hurrah: Harley Vandeloo won the 500 cc Other Brands prize money with 66 mpg on a 1962 BSA Goldstar.)

Early in the run it became obvious the clock would be the toughest opposition. Following a number of pre-runs, Vetter had set the time frame at 2 hours, 43 minutes, and added a 15-minute margin for delays. Finishing out of the time window meant finishing out of the money.

Perethian lost three minutes at the start when a bungee cord holding the flexible side curtain broke. And at the two-hour checkpoint, mile 104, he had used up his entire 15-minute buffer. So, the winner had to wick it up for the last 30 miles, using more fuel than he would have liked, but he made the finish at Carmel with seven minutes to spare—at a miserly 282.157 mpg.

Traffic and twisties slowed the Honda and Hanebrink entries as well, but it was the Pacific wind that finally scratched their efforts—and their canopies. Between Big Sur and Point Lobos the highway stretches out into the headlands, descending to near sea level toward the southern edge of Monterey Bay. Farther north, several sightings of great white sharks had brought out No Swimming signs, but here it was the wind that was getting its teeth into the landscape. Coming out of the northwest, the gusts bounced off the coastal hillocks, whipped around from the southeast, stopped, then started up again throwing in some optional patterns.

The winds were mean enough to make riding any *unfaired* bike a chore, and easily could slam a lightweight, fully enclosed motorcycle down on the tarmac. When the Honda flopped and skidded to a halt, the upper canopy was trashed, and though the crew removed it quickly, the Honda entry was now on the wrong side of the clock and down on power.

"It wasn't running well after the crash," Debbie Evans said. "I had to slip the clutch and gas it a whole bunch and then let off to get more fuel into the carburetor.

"But up 'til then it was fun to ride. It was so smooth. I liked going around corners and dragging the fairing. It *was* kind of spooky in those winds, though. Next year we'll have to make something with less side area to it."

In spite of the crash-induced aerodynamic penalty, the Honda still finished with 276 mpg. Dan Hanebrink's machine, likewise victimized by the wind, arrived six minutes late and got 237 mpg. Doug Malewicki's California Commuter was the second machine to make the finish under the time clock, at 169 mpg. The tardy Suzuki/Vesco/Guzzetta entry got 152 mpg, and Craig Vetter brought his KZ 250 in on time with a thirst factor of 108.

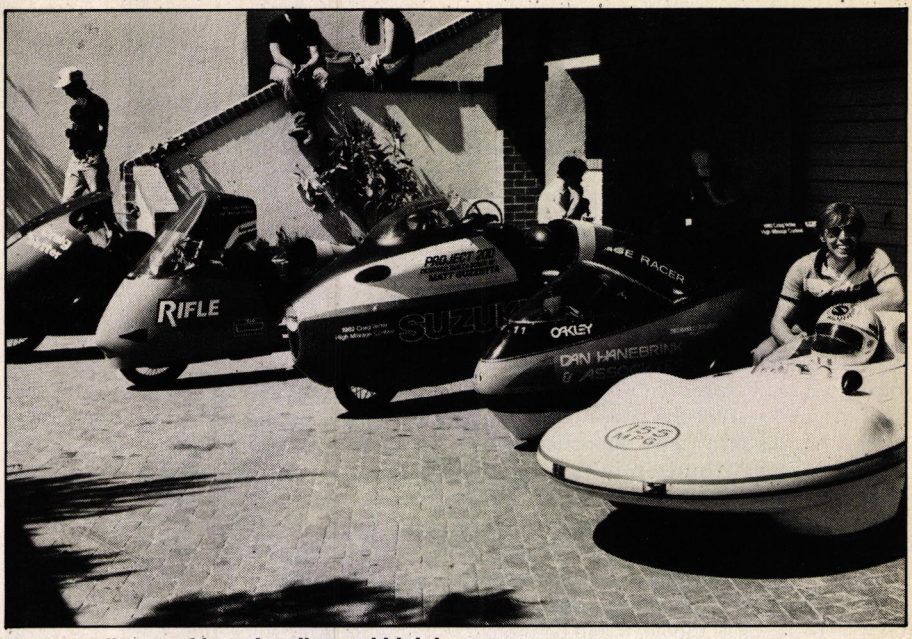
The $600 prize for first overall in the production class went to Brenda Wilvert, with 112 mpg on an 80cc Kawasaki. She was assisted by her husband, former roadracer Hurley Wilvert. The "Doing Most with Least" award, and $300, went to Dan Wilson, who bought a thrashed Kawasaki KL250 for $100. He blew six dollars on parts, rode it down from Carmel and back, logging 103 mpg plus a tidy profit.

Craig Vetter plans to do it next year, again concurrent with the roadraces at Laguna Seca. "I don't think Honda quite realized that the road was so windy," he said. "Their streamliner is basically a bicycle fairing, not designed for the highway. I hope they're not discouraged, and that they realize motorcycles on real roads shouldn't blow over in the wind."

Vetter hopes to make the annual event the world's top showcase of motorcycle mileage—and Perethian intends to keep the hand-sculptured perpetual trophy in his shop. The target number for next year's Rifle entry is 400 mpg.

"In the book 'Real Men Don't Eat Quiche,' said Vetter, "it says real men ride motorcycles. But it also says real men don't enter fuel-economy runs. I don't think people believe there's a fuel problem. We can watch the oil wells go up and protest about it, or the nuclear reactors built and cry about them. What we should do is change our living style and use less energy. Then there won't be any reason for more wells or reactors.

"I'm sponsoring contests to encourage people to believe it's okay to use less energy. Real men *can* win mileage contests." ●



Pre-start lineup of broad smiles and high hopes

But a stiff Pacific breeze soon wiped off some of those grins.

Debbie Evans piloted Honda's entry

To an unfortunate late finish.

Hanebrink surveys the damage on his 130-pound, single-cylinder streamliner

Down but not out, he finished late—still turning in 237 mpg.

MINITEST:

Kawasaki GPz550

Calling it one of the world's great peg-draggers is telling only half the story.

• It's all true, every word of it. Kawasaki's GPz550 really is the mid-size *wunderbike* that magazine testers, canyon crazies and Box-Stock roadracers everywhere claim it to be. But amidst all of the praise that's been heaped on this bike for its supremacy as a pure performer, one important fact all too often has been overlooked: The GPz550 is an outstanding *all-around* motorcycle as well as a consummate sportbike.

Indeed, no matter the riding situation, from the maniacal to the mundane, the GPz550 performs as though it had been built expressly for the job. It seems not at all like a quarter-mile rocket nor a class-dominating roadracer when it's merrily burbling along in bumper-to-bumper congestion, just as it offers no hint of its urbobike potential while strafing a twisty backroad or leading the pack into Turn One. You just dial up the kind of performance you need at any given moment and the GPz delivers, willingly and without evidence of compromise.

Even last year, the GPz550's inaugural season, this fire-engine-red eye-catcher was a well-rounded performer and, in most minds, The Class of the 550 class. But a number of substantial refinements have just about put the '82 model in a class by itself. For instance, the GPz already was 1981's fastest 550, but it now has even more acceleration welled up inside of its double-cam, eight-valve four. Credit that to a 12-pound weight loss and improved high-rpm breathing afforded by carburetors (and intake ports) that are 4mm larger in diameter. And since the 26mm TK carbs are of the constant-vacuum variety, the low-rpm throttle response is crisper and more precise than with last year's 22mm slide/needle instruments.

Other than those minor intake hop-ups, though, the '82 engine is the same 553cc, six-speed powerplant it was in '81. But that's not so bad, since no one seemed the least bit dismayed with the way last year's bike ran. And if they liked that one, they'll simply *love* this one. It zips through the gears with alarming quickness, revving up to its 10,000-rpm redline so easily that you can accidentally float the valves in the lower gears if you're not watchful of the fast-moving tach needle. And the GPz doesn't confine its hard-charging horsepower to just the upper end of the rpm range, either; the power delivery is surprisingly linear for a superfast 550, although there is, admittedly, a noticeable increase in thrust above 6500 rpm. But the GPz has enough mid-range wallop that its roll-on acceleration feels more like what you might expect from something 100cc or 200cc larger. And it is that snappy performance throughout the bottom half of the rev range that makes the GPz550 so pleasant just to putt around on when you're not wearing your raceface.

So, too, does the chassis behave admirably at the far extremes of performance. On the track, it carves through corners like a thoroughbred racer, and yet it's reassuringly stable and easy to maneuver on the street. The '82 model has a two-inch longer wheelbase than the '81, with 1.5 degrees of added steering angle and 0.4 inches more trail. All of which has added enough stability to make the newest GPz rock-steady at high speed without destroying its ability to dart around city corners and backroad hairpins with slot-car quickness.

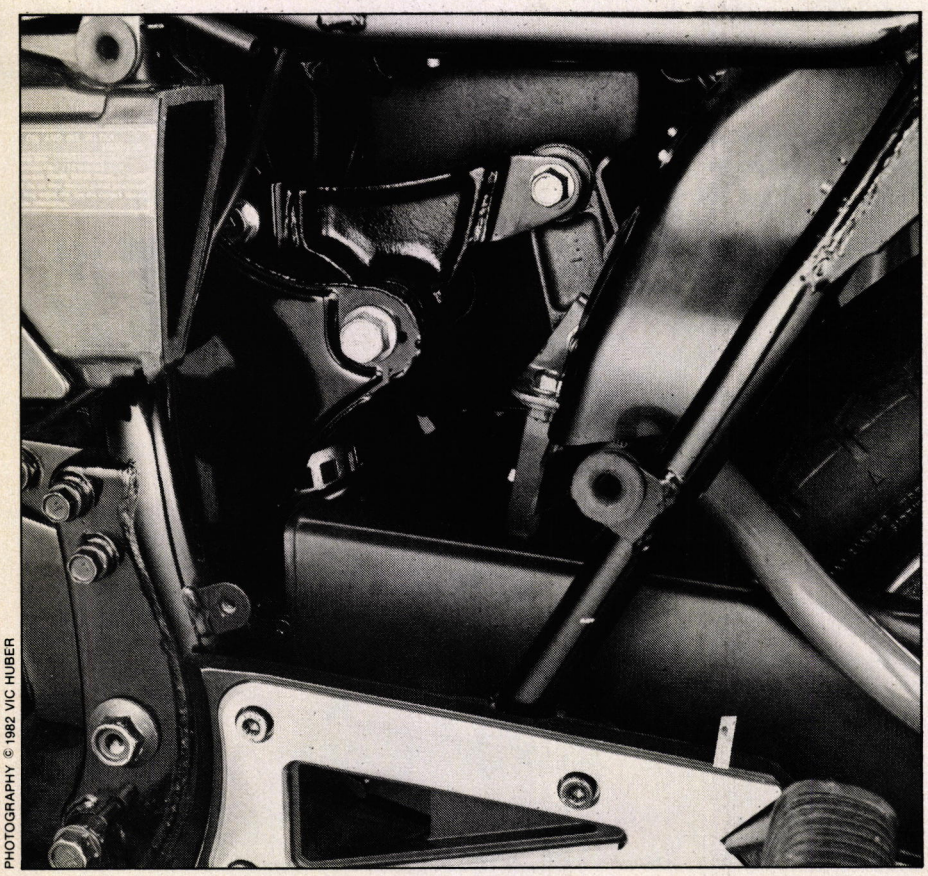
Neither has the addition of Uni-Trak single-shock rear suspension hurt the GPz550's all-aroundness one bit. The increase in the quantity (5.6 vs. 5.3 inches) and quality of rear-wheel travel has clearly upped the comfort quotient on the street; and the rear wheel's improved responsiveness is a cornering bonus on rough sections of racetrack and twisty road.

This incarnation of the Uni-Trak concept, however, is less like that used on Kawasaki dirt bikes than it is like Suzuki's Full Floater

KAWASAKI GPz550

Importer: Kawasaki Motors Corp.
2009 East Edinger Avenue
Santa Ana, California 92711

Category	street
Suggested retail price	$2749
Engine type	four-stroke transverse vertical four
Valve arrangement	double overhead camshafts
Bore and stroke	58.0mm x 52.4mm
Displacement	553.8cc
Compression ratio	10.0:1
Carburetion	four 26mm Teikei Kikaki constant-vacuum
Gearbox	6-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	Showa air-spring, 35mm stanchion tube diameter/6.7 in. (171mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	single Kayaba shock, 10mm spring preload adj., 4-way adj. rebound damping/5.6 in. (143mm)
Wheelbase	57.0 to 58.4 in. (1447 to 1483mm)
Seat height	30.6 in. (776mm)
Weight	437 lbs. (198kg)
Best 1/4-mile acceleration	13.203 sec., 99.55 mph (160 km/h)
Top speed (calculated)	132 mph (212 km/h)
Stopping distance from 60 mph	132 ft. (40m)
Fuel consumption	43 to 61 mpg (18 to 26 km/l)
Warranty	6 months unlimited mileage
Available color	red only



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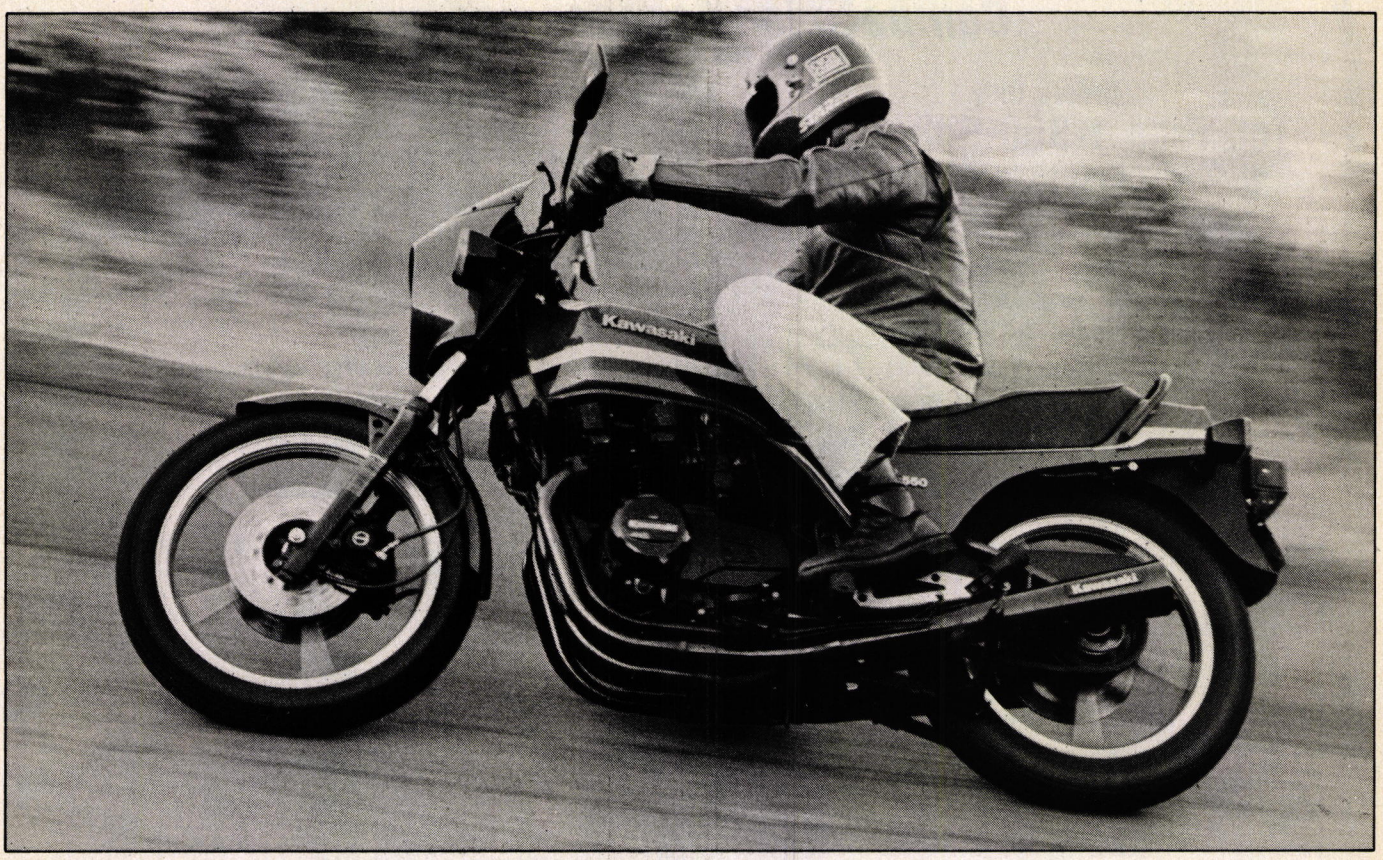
Uni-Trak rocker and linkage, hidden from plain view beneath the GPz's seat

Putting the squeeze on the shock from both ends.



© 1982 PATRICK BEHAR

GPz550 is known far and wide as a corner-charger extraordinaire

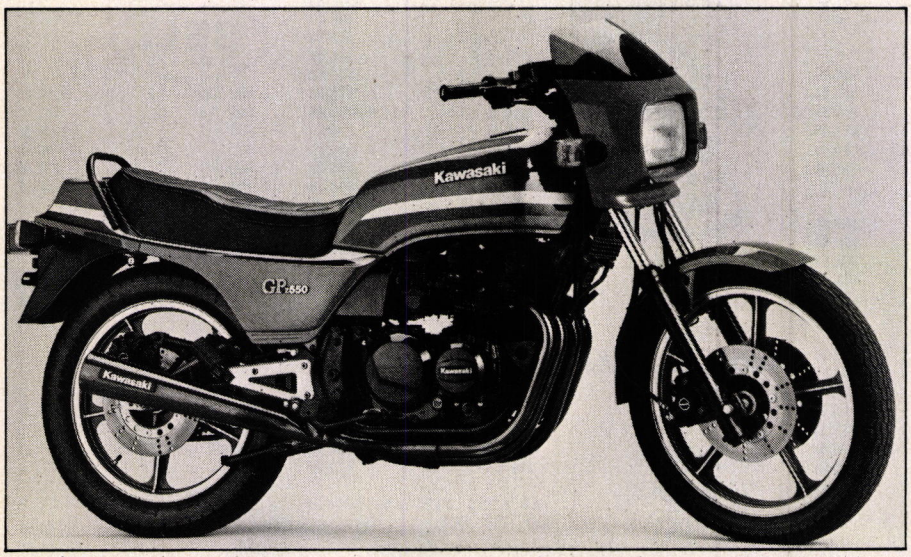
But it's just as wonderful when the horizon is straight and the tach needle isn't hovering near the red zone.

system. The bottom eyelet of the deCarbon gas-charged shock mounts to the swingarm rather than to the frame, while the top attaches to a rocker that also is linked to the swingarm. Thus the shock gets compressed from *both* ends, and the linkage's geometry provides rising rates of both springing and damping.

Those rates can be adjusted to suit a broad variety of riders and riding conditions. You select one of four rebound-damping settings by moving a small plastic thumbwheel on the bottom of the shock; you change preload on the non-air-assisted coil spring by turning the threaded collar atop the spring. The former procedure is quick and easy, but the latter is not, requiring the removal of the left sidecover and the air-cleaner assembly, followed by the slow, close-quarters turning of the collar with a spanner supplied in the toolkit. The payoff, though, is that the shock (and the air-assisted front fork) can be tuned to deliver plush comfort for the street, firm wheel control for the track, or virtually anything in between.

The difficulty in making shock adjustments is one of the few complaints that anyone is likely to have about the GPz550. That, and the fact that the engine is somewhat buzzy at and above normal cruising rpm. It could also be pointed out that the Mag Mopus tires tend to squirm as you approach ten-tenths cornering, and that the four-piece, compound clip-on type handlebars offer no provisions for the installation of a regular bar. But since serious peg-draggers undoubtedly will change to racier rubber right away and the stock handlebars are pretty close to being ergonomically perfect, neither of those gripes carry much weight.

Actually, the entire motorcycle is pretty close to perfect, which makes it easy to understand why the GPz550 has become one of the most popular sportbikes of any size. It has an unassailable reputation built on the strength of its prowess as a street/track racer, but there's more to this bike than scuffed footpegs and balled-up rubber on the outer edges of the tires. This is a true meat-and-potatoes machine, truly one of the most versatile motorcycles you can buy at any price. That it's also a legitimate racebike—the "new RD400," as some have labeled it—just as it rolls out of the showroom is merely the gravy. —*Paul Dean*



The GPz's styling has almost become synonymous with clipped apexes and scarred pegs

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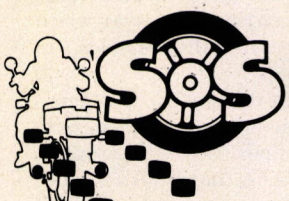

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PRODUCT EVALUATION:

Pacifico Aero Fairing

A full-sized fairing for middleweight motorcycles.

• Pacifico designers will tell you the Aero fairing isn't intended to compete directly with the yardstick of fairings, the Vetter Windjammer. They say the Aero is aimed for the middle ground, that gray area between the Windjammer and its smaller sibling, the Quicksilver. The Aero is supposed to be a downsized fairing for middleweight motorcycles, a sort of cross between a full-sail touring fairing and a sport fairing.

Well, don't you believe it. First, while the Aero was developed for use on middleweights (500-650cc), it adapts to liter-size bikes as well. And downsized it might be in the minds of the designers, but at 29½ inches wide versus 32½ inches for the Windjammer, it's not that much smaller. Where the downsize claim makes sense, however, is in weight. Claimed weights for the fairings are 41 pounds for the Vetter product compared to only 27 pounds for the Pacifico, when both are equipped with optional lowers.

Downsizing didn't affect the amount of storage space available in the Aero, though. The pockets on each side of the fairing extend all the way to the front behind the headlight, and it's possible to stick an arm in each side and shake hands with yourself inside the fairing. Pacifico claims 1850 cubic inches of storage space for the Aero, almost double that of the Windjammer and only 50 cubic inches less than that of Pacifico's largest fairing, the Classic. Access to all that space is by way of large (approximately 8 inches by 5 inches) locking plastic lids. The irregular shape of the pockets can complicate packing, however, and the uncovered wiring harness and turnsignal hardware inside can snag on clothing.

Equipping the Aero with lowers can produce snags in another area. Those lowers make mounting the fairing a test of patience, particularly on a motorcycle with a wide engine and tank, such as our Suzuki GS850. There simply wasn't much room to pass a hand loaded with washers and a nut between the engine and the lowers, to get at each of the six bolts that hold the fairing to its mounting bracket. The six-bolt system, however, is the result of excessive shake-testing, says Pacifico, and is claimed to be superior in clamping strength to the Vetter's four-bolt mount.

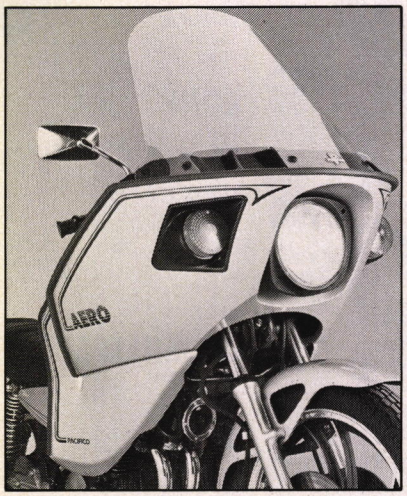
But while the Vetter fairing spots the Aero a couple of mounting bolts, the Aero falls slightly short on protection. Pacifico's fairing is narrower than the 31-inch-wide handlebar on the GS850, which leaves the rider's elbows and last two fingers out in the breeze. Beyond that, the Aero provides excellent protection, as long as you stick with one of the two larger windscreens Pacifico offers. When riding behind the Aero's optional sport bubble screen, protection is limited to torso-only.

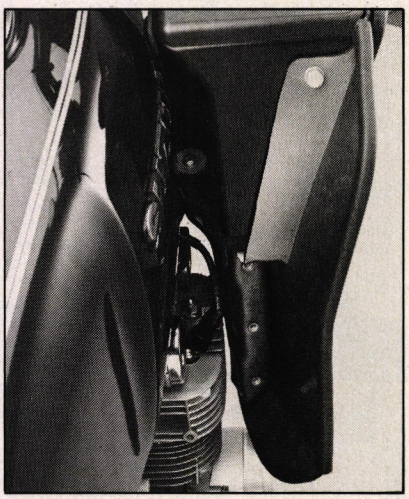
The screen itself incorporates a feature which no other fairing has: ports on the front of the fairing at the base of the windscreen. According to Pacifico, those ports are designed to duct air into the negative-pressure area normally behind a windscreen. In addition, the air coming through the ports travels straight up the back of the screen and pushes the air stream traveling over the screen up, creating a larger pocket of still air for the rider. All of which is *supposed* to decrease the amount of buffeting around helmet-level. However, we rode behind the Aero both with the ports open and with them taped shut, and could detect no discernible difference. Either way, there was little buffeting and no annoying wind drafts curling around and pushing on the rider from behind as with some other fairings.

Nor does the Aero look like some other fairings. More specifically, it doesn't resemble a Windjammer or any of the dozens of Windjammer clones available. Quality, though, is largely Vetter-like; the fairing's surfaces are smooth and the paint is evenly applied. The Aero lowers, however, have crudely hewn edges which are annoying because they're always in plain view.

Which brings us back to the Aero/Windjammer comparison. And, despite Pacifico's objections, that comparison is where the Aero looks the best. It's cheaper, lighter, has more storage space and sacrifices only a small amount of weather protection. And that's the best recommendation you can make for the Aero.

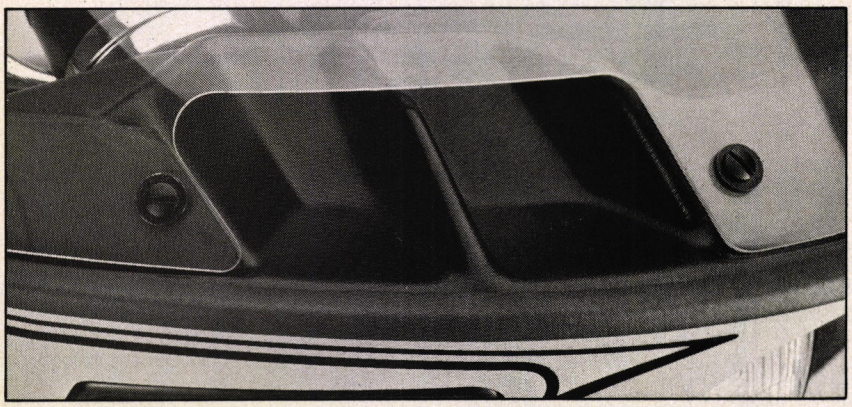
Retail prices for the Aero are approximately $70 for the bracket, $356 for the fairing, $94 for the lowers, $43 for either the maxi or sport touring windscreen and $130 for the sport bubble screen. Options include a speaker kit and a cigarette lighter. For more information, see your motorcycle dealer or contact Pacifico Inc., 1625 S.E. Hogan, Gresham, Oregon 97030; (503) 666-5502. *—Charles Everitt*



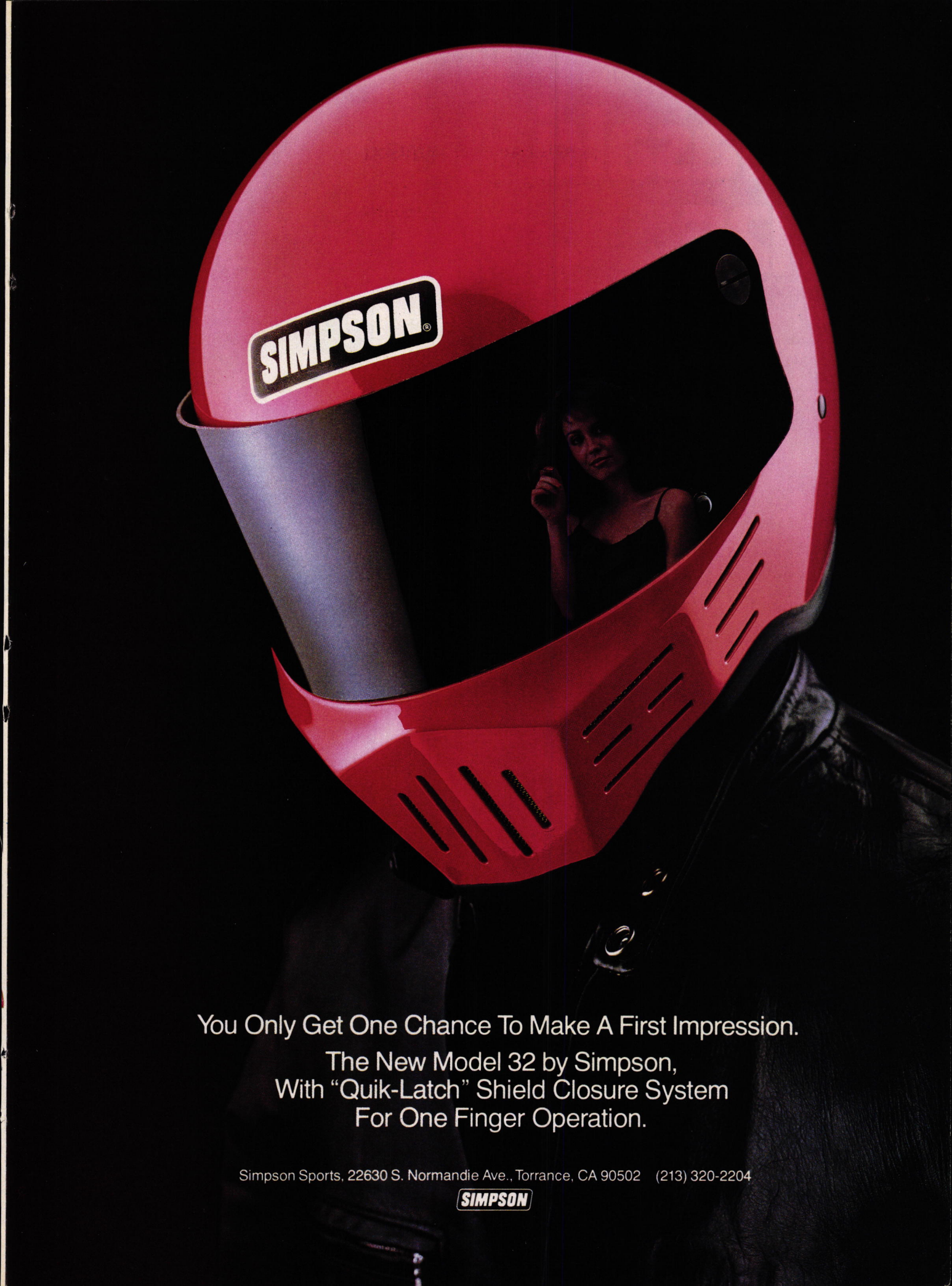


Pacifico's answer to the downsized, middleweight question

And it's applicable to larger, heavier queries, too.



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 VIC HUBER



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TRACK TEST:

Kawasaki KX125

Kawasaki gets the timing right.

BY RON LAWSON

If history is the best indicator of present events, Kawasaki's KX125-B1 shouldn't be anything more than a brief glint of green somewhere at the back of the 125cc motocross pack. After all, outside of the mini ranks, Kawasaki's past motocross record is about as encouraging as the sales figures for bagels in Beirut. And there's no reason for the oddsmakers suddenly to expect anything more from this year's 125.

But Kawasaki's lack of showroom-and-track success has been more the result of poor timing than of poor machinery. Yesterday's technology won't cut it in today's race, and Kawasaki has developed a reputation for consistently being a year or two out of step. A list of the company's 125cc motocrossers reads like a What's What of motorcycling's nearest engineering misses.

In 1979, the KX125 was flawed by 1977-standard suspension. The next year, Kawasaki's most shining achievement—Uni-Trak suspension—was dimmed by an engine that was underpowered by *any* standards. And in 1981, while Kawasaki was bringing the KX up to speed, the rest of the industry moved on and made liquid-cooling a mandatory part of the modern 125cc motocrosser. Again the KX was left out.

So it really wouldn't have surprised anyone if the '82 KX125 had turned out to be just another unexceptional machine in a series of behind-the-times mediocrossers. But the newest KX is nothing of the sort. In fact, not only has it caught up with mainstream 125 technology, this Kawasaki actually has taken a small step into the lead.

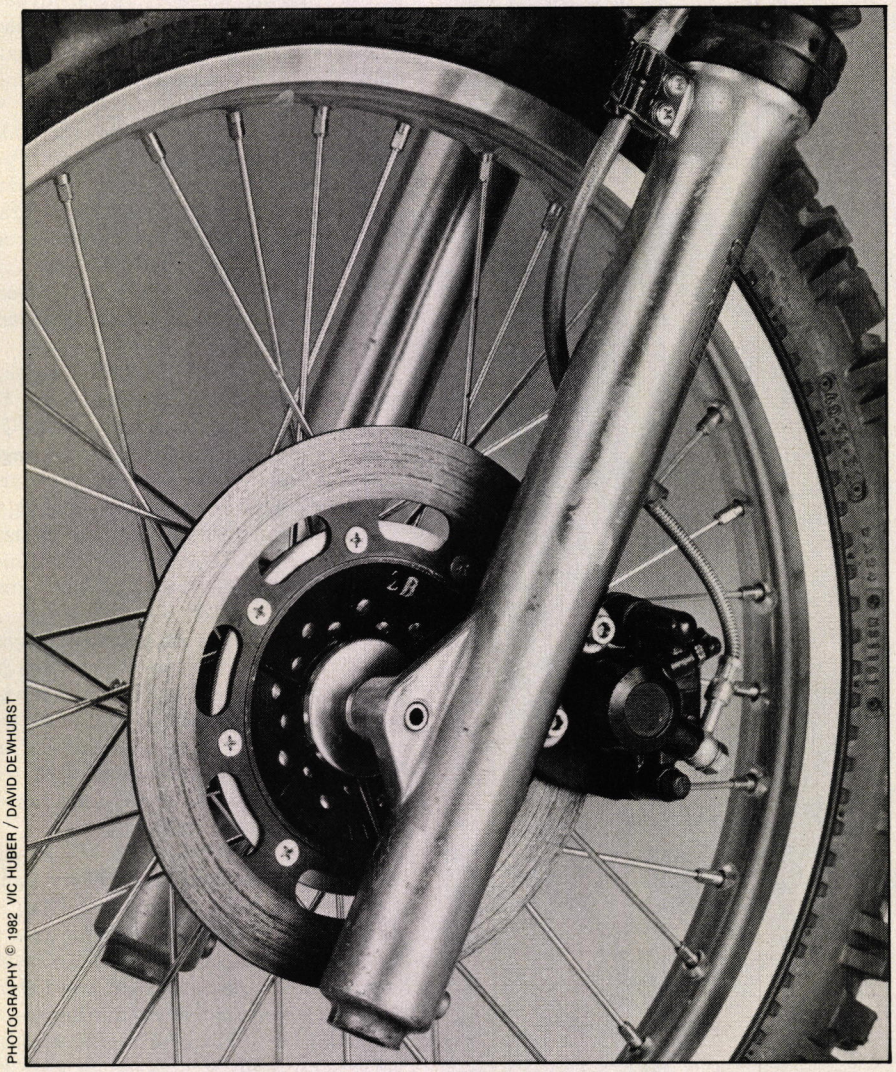
Breathing new life into the KX required the creation of an almost entirely new motorcycle, and that's exactly what the B1 is. The incorporation of liquid-cooling is the most visible of the changes. Radiators and water pumps have become standard fare for 125s, and their absence not only would have been a marketing death knell, but a source of late-lap impotence in long motos, as well. Kawasaki also had to bring its rear suspension up to today's standard; even though the original Uni-Trak design pioneered on Brad Lackey's works 500cc machine was capable of progressively increasing suspension rates, the '80 and '81 KX125s actually had the opposite—*regressive* suspension. Symptom corrected: The KX now has rising-rate rear suspension, and technologically it's in the same league as the rest of the 125 class.

But being in the same league isn't enough. In motocross, just like in any racing, finishing second is the same as losing, and that's why Kawasaki is plunging ahead with the first production application of a hydraulic disc brake to a serious lightweight motocrosser.

The KX has produced some surprises this year. It started behind the technopack and has moved up to become the machine that represents more practical technology than any other in motocross today. But technology in a motocrosser is nothing if it's not backed by performance. And it's the performance of the KX that holds the biggest surprise of all.

Continued

Kawasaki KX125-B1: Tech Inspection



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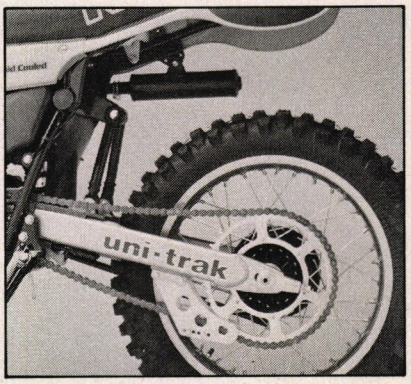
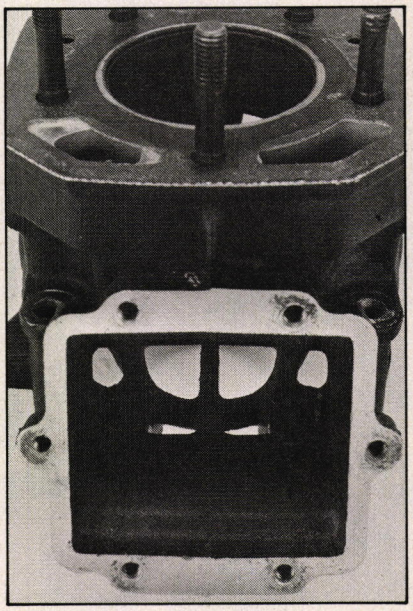
Kawasaki's KX125 is the only production 125cc motocrosser with a disc brake

Dispelling myths about hydraulics on motocross machinery.



KX suspension evolution continues

The Uni's rate rises to the occasion.



KX-ray of an intake tract

Ports lead up, down and sideways.

Engine:

With the KX125-B1, Kawasaki has moved into the age of liquid-cooling. But, despite the addition of radiators and plumbing, the entire motorcycle is lighter than its air-cooled predecessor; and most of the weight savings are in the redesigned engine. The new cases are much smaller, and are designed so that the rear motor mount affixes to the swingarm pivot axle.

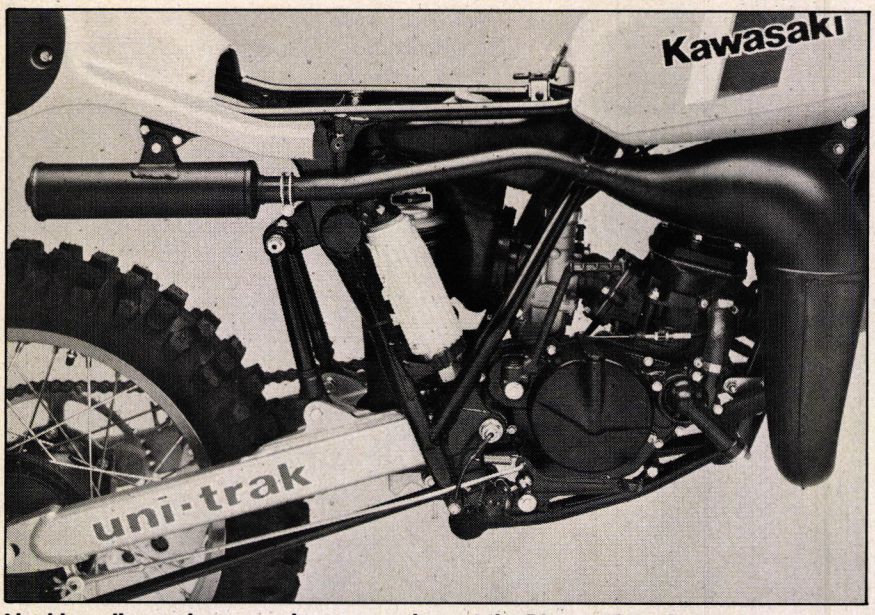
Other features, like the Electrofusion-coated cylinder, remain from last year. The coated cylinder provides excellent heat dissipation and extended engine life, but when the cylinder does wear out it can't be rebored. Within the barrel, the KX125 has a six-petal reed block feeding a bridged intake port that has passages leading into the transfers. A bridged, booster transfer port extends upward from the top edge of the intake port. The exhaust port is T-shaped with a bridge running vertically through its center. Kawasaki has lowered the roof of the exhaust port slightly for an improvement in mid-range power. The change also results in a higher compression ratio.

A new oval-venturi Mikuni carburetor is claimed to increase low- and mid-range throttle response. Kawasaki has been using oval-venturi carbs on its KX80s since 1981, and the company says they provide better fuel atomization. The 125's carb throat approximates that of a 29mm round-bore carb at small throttle openings, progressing to the equivalent of a 34.25mm conventional carb when the throttle is fully open.

Suspension:

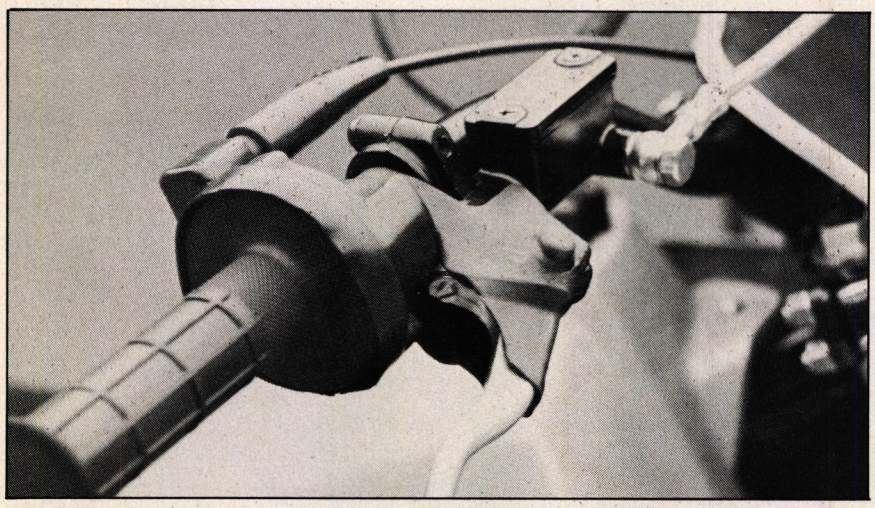
Front: As is the case on every other current Japanese motocrosser, Kayaba manufactures the fork. The stanchion tubes are larger than those on any other 125, though, measuring 41mm. Air caps are standard but Kawasaki recommends zero psi, preferring the rider to adjust oil level, preload and spring rate to fine-tune the suspension.

Rear: Kayaba also makes the Uni-Trak shock, which has four rebound-damping settings. The Uni-Trak linkage has been



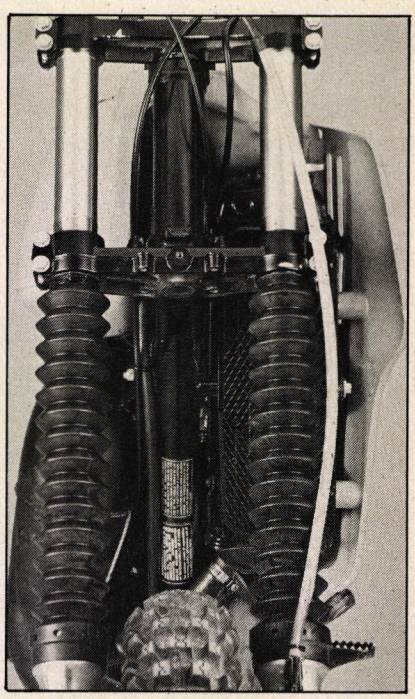
Liquid-cooling and progressive suspension set the B1 apart from its predecessors

Kawasaki slid an entirely new motorcycle underneath the green.



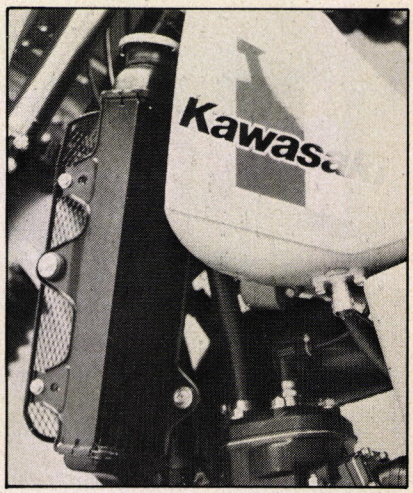
Small-capacity reservoir feeds hydraulic caliper through steel-braided hose

A lightweight system for easy stops, but difficult maintenance.



Left-wing KX radiator

Kawasaki's one-sided approach.



redesigned this year to give the rear wheel progressive rates of springing and damping. A dual-rate spring is used to augment the rising-rate linkage and to allow the Kawasaki to respond better to small bumps.

Drivetrain:

Kawasaki has changed the primary-drive, final-drive and gearbox ratios on this year's machine. The end result is slightly taller overall gearing. This might have been done largely to save weight, though; many of the new transmission gears are smaller in diameter and have fewer teeth than last year's. The clutch still has six fiber drive plates and five aluminum driven plates.

Chassis:

Frame: This year's KX is slightly shorter than last year's, but the chromoly frame has the same single-downtube configuration. A box-section aluminum swingarm still is used but is now gold-anodized.

Wheels: One of the machine's most noticeable new features is its hydraulic front disc brake. A small master cylinder is mounted on the handlebar, connecting to the caliper through a steel-braided brake hose. The owner's manual recommends DOT 3 brake fluid, but Kawasaki's racing department uses DOT 5 silicone fluid.

Takasago makes the Kawasaki's rims, which are claimed to be stronger than last year's. Like the swingarm, both rims are gold-anodized.

Details:

Kawasaki uses first-rate controls for the KX. The grips are soft and much like those on Honda motocrossers. The levers are dog-legged this year and the new twist-grip keeps the throttle cable parallel to the handlebar. The 125's gas tank has been reshaped to accommodate the single, left-side-mounted radiator, and it now holds slightly less fuel. The side number plates now are a part of the rear fender.

Continued

Kawasaki KX125-B1: Will it win?

• When you roll a Kawasaki KX125-B1 to the start line, you can be certain that you're not going to blend into the background jumble of radiators, single-shock suspensions and dirt tricks that has become so commonplace at MX tracks these days.

The machine's specifications will try to tell you that the differences between the KX and the rest of the 125 pack are trivial, now that Kawasaki is offering all of those same features. But the KX still is the most distinctive 125 on the track. That distinctiveness starts with the bike's offbeat appearance, but goes much deeper than the lime-green color or left-side radiator. It's on the track that the KX truly sets itself apart.

You get your first taste of the KX's unusual flavor as soon as you open the throttle. It's a quick-revving machine, but unlike most 125s, the midrange is the bike's prime

© 1982 PAUL DEAN

Berm-blasting Kawasaki KX125-B1 prepares to bombard American motocross tracks with wins

The Kawasaki made a great impact at the tracks despite a one-year delayed detonation.

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

Make & Model	Wheel Travel Front/Rear, in.	Weight (fuel tank empty), lb.	Weight bias Front/ Rear, percent	Steering head angle/ Trail, degrees/inches	Transmission, number of speeds
Kawasaki KX125–'82	11.2/11.4	200	48.0/52.0	28.0/4.8	6
Suzuki RM125–'82	11.2/12.6	197	47.7/52.3	29.5/4.8	6
Honda CR125R–'81	10.6/11.5	213	46.7/53.3	29.5/4.8	6
Kawasaki KX125–'81	10.4/11.3	207	48.0/52.0	28.0/4.7	6
Suzuki RM125–'81	10.8/11.7	205	47.7/52.3	29.5/4.8	6

work zone. In fact, the KX produces all of its usable power in the mid-rpm level. A blast of torque hits the rear wheel at a moderately low-rpm point, and then the bike rampages through its powerband. But if you venture too high in the revs, the KX throws out the anchor. It simply stops accelerating and begs for an upshift. And it's in that top-end zone where the KX loses ground, because while its rider is searching for another gear, other machines can keep pushing toward the next turn.

Not that the KX's powerband is narrow. The engine starts making horses much earlier than most, but it gets *on* that powerband abruptly. If you're a rider who relies on low-rpm throttle control, you might have to adjust your riding style; the KX is more responsive to clutch-fanning than to delicate throttle work. Through many high-speed turns, it's best to hold the throttle wide open and control the engine speed with careful clutch use. But that's okay, since the clutch can handle a lot of torture. The only symptom of clutch over-fan that the rider might encounter will be near the end of a long moto, when the lever starts to develop excessive freeplay as the plates get hot and expand. But no matter how badly the clutch is abused, it doesn't slip.

Long motos won't see the KX's power fade, either. The B1 feels fresh regardless of how long the race or how hot the day. That's testimony that liquid-cooling finally is off trial as a gimmick for the masses. It's a sales feature that works.

But the feature that contributes most to the Kawasaki's identity isn't the motor or powerband; it's the bike's *feel*. The lopsided look of the KX doesn't translate into strange or clumsy handling on the track. The radiator is unnoticeable once the moto starts. What the rider will notice is the machine's cooperation. It works with the rider smoothly, and has none of the twitchy manners that mark most small-bores. You pick your line and the KX usually holds true to it, come hell or high whoopdies.

Even though the KX is stable in the rough stuff, it doesn't shy away from the turns. Turning, in fact, is one of the things the KX does best. The steering geometry isn't decidedly quick, but the KX does respond well to rider input. With a slight shift of weight or a touch of pressure on the handlebar, the machine easily falls into the correct turning position. And once in the turn, the bike is secure. If the rear end steps out too far, a bit less throttle or another weight shift corrects the problem smoothly. Mid-turn bumps and holes don't throw the KX off its rhythm, either. The machine remains stable and soaks up the rough stuff easily.

Much of the credit goes to the Kawasaki's born-again suspension. This year the new Uni-Trak is rising-rate, and so the small braking bumps and irregularities that were transmitted straight to the riders of older KXs are barely noticeable on the B1. But the Uni-Trak still has difficulty standing up to killer-sized whoops. When the terrain gets rough the KX loses its otherwise-remarkable stability as the rear end bottoms and hops. Bottoming isn't a crime, but bottoming *harshly* is. The KX hits with an unexpected clunk that can cause you to do things you hadn't planned and have no need for. Light riders won't suffer such severe bottoming problems, but they will feel the KX is harsh in the initial part of its travel.

The Kayaba fork can accommodate a wider range of riders. The stanchion tubes are 41mm—three millimeters larger than any others in the 125 class. And as you would expect from such hefty tubes, the KX's front end never squirms or flexes.

And even more distinctive than the oversize fork is the front disc brake, which outstops any brake on any production motocrosser made. Even the conventional drum brake at the other end of the KX seems weak by comparison, although it's merely average. Not only does the disc brake seem to have enough stopping power to drag a runaway train to a halt, it has a smooth and progressive feel.

It's easy to forget the brake's advantages, though, the first time you replace the brake fluid. The system's tiny piston displaces so little fluid that it's a slow and difficult process to work all of the air out of the system through the traditional squeeze-and-bleed method.

Also, during the test we crashed the KX. That's not unusual. What was unusual was that the brake caliper was destroyed in the process, making for a $100 get-off. Even the steel-braided brake hose alone retails for $69. Performance isn't cheap.

And the KX is a performer. It isn't perfect, but its flaws in power delivery and suspension are correctable. And the B1 is an incredible improvement over anything Kawasaki has produced in the past. That's no backhanded compliment, either, because the KX is very close to being the best 125 motocrosser *anyone* has ever produced. And that's enough to serve notice to the rest of the 125 makers: Kawasaki now is in the race. *—Ron Lawson*

Ride Review

• Whoops! I guess the KX125 caught me with my prejudice showing. I first got on the thing fully expecting it to be yet another day-late-and-dollar-short Kawasaki motocrosser, something that could be competitive only if everyone else in the race were riding two-year-old motorcycles. That's the way it's always been with production Kawacrossers, and I saw no reason why this one would be any different.

I saw wrong. The B1-model KX125 is, without a doubt, the niftiest berm-seeking two-wheeler ever sold by Kawasaki, just missing being the best 125 MXer of all by the slimmest of margins. Only the way the power suddenly falls off and the slightly choppy rear suspension keep the B1 from dethroning the RM as the perennial king.

Despite that, though, I really enjoy the KX because it's so much more fun to ride than the Suzuki, even if it can't cut faster laps. But other than that, the KX predictably, consistently and *easily* does every reasonable thing I could possibly ask—and most of the unreasonable ones, as well. I climb off of it feeling like I've flat used it up, yet there's still more there for the taking. So although the RM is the hot tip for bringing home trophies, for pure, unadulterated, 125-class racing enjoyment, the KX is the best thing since the invention of dirt. *—Paul Dean*

• Piloting the B1 brought back some special memories of races past. You see, the KX and I are old friends from the days when I rode for Team Green, so I know just where to tickle the machine to make it do tricks. Just like old times, I can guide the KX over some of the most offbeat lines and not worry about it spitting me off. And the KX even has learned some new tricks in our time apart. The suspension, for one thing, is worlds better. Braking bumps were major barriers for older KXs, but for the B1 those same bumps are just reminders that it's time to prepare to turn. You don't need a wide-open throttle to make the rear end work.

But riding the KX also brought back some less-happy memories. This Kawasaki still lacks the horsepower to stay ahead of the pack on anything but a tight stadium-style track. That's why any Kawasaki parked in my pit would have to be a little more than stock. I know the potential for rocketship performance is buried in the KX's engine; it's just a matter of bringing it to the surface.

Once the KX stops giving away free positions in the straights, it will get my vote for Best 125—but not as it sits in stock semifast condition. Even old friends don't count when it comes to racing.

—Vince McMahon

Continued

CYCLE GUIDE SPECIFICATIONS

Kawasaki KX125-B1 motocross

IMPORTER: Kawasaki Motors Corp., 2009 East Edinger Avenue, Santa Ana, California 92711

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $1629

ENGINE

Type ..... liquid-cooled two-stroke vertical single
Port arrangement ..... one reed-valve-controlled intake, four main transfers, one bridged booster transfer, one exhaust
Bore and stroke ..... 56.0mm x 50.6mm
Displacement 124.6cc
Compression ratio (corrected) 8.2:1
Carburetion ... one 34mm oval-venturi Mikuni slide/needle
Air filter ..... washable oiled foam element
Lubrication ..... pre-mixed fuel and oil
Starting system ..... primary kick
Ignition ..... internal-rotor magneto CDI
Charging system ..... none

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive ..... straight-cut gears; 3.500:1 ratio
Clutch ..... wet, multi-plate
Final drive ..... #520 chain (5/8-in. pitch, 1/4-in. width); 3.923:1 (51/13) ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	2.308	31.686	2.4
II	1.750	24.029	3.2
III	1.400	19.223	4.0
IV	1.182	16.227	4.7
V	1.042	14.303	5.3
VI	0.955	13.107	5.8

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front ..... Kayaba air-spring, 41mm stanchion tube diameter/11.2 in. (285mm)
Rear ..... single Kayaba shock, 10mm spring preload adjustment, 4-way adjustable rebound damping/11.4 in. (290mm)

BRAKES

Front ..... single-action hydraulic caliper, 9.4-in. (240mm) disc
Rear..... drum, single-leading shoe, rod-operated

TIRES

Front ..... 3.00 x 21 Bridgestone Motocross M23
Rear ..... 4.00 x 18 Bridgestone Motocross M22

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Weight ..... 200 lbs. (91kg)
Weight distribution ..... 48.0% front, 52.0% rear
Wheelbase ..... 56.7 to 57.5 in. (1441 to 1462mm)
Seat height ..... 35.6 in. (904mm)
Handlebar width ..... 32.3 in. (820mm)
Footpeg height ..... 15.4 in. (391mm)
Ground clearance ..... 12.1 in. (308mm), at engine cradle
Steering head angle ..... 28.0 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail ..... 4.76 in. (121mm)
Frame ..... tubular chromoly steel, single front downtube
Fuel tank ..... plastic, 2.1 gal. (7.8*l*), no reserve
Instrumentation ..... none

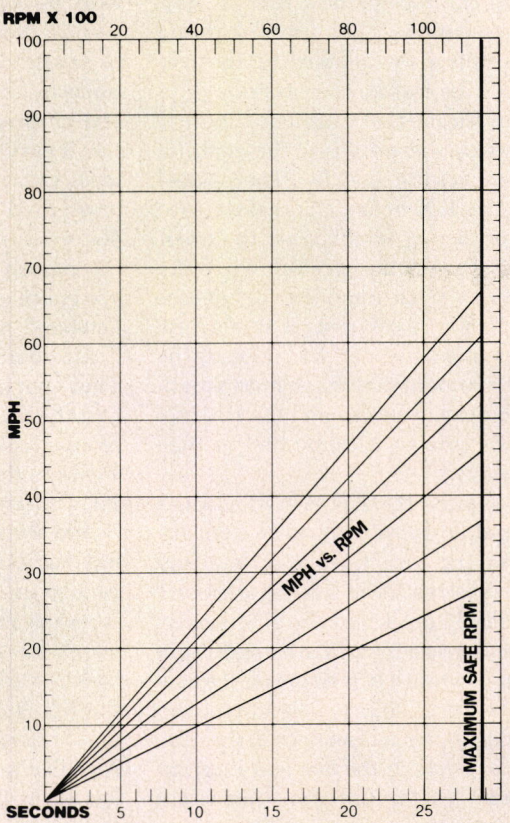
PERFORMANCE

Top speed (calculated) ..... 67 mph (108 km/h)

WARRANTY: none

AVAILABLE COLOR: green only

All weights and measurements are taken with machine unladen and fuel tank empty



BETTER THAN STOCK:

Kawasaki KX125-B1

Turning the winner's circle a deeper shade of green.

• The temptation simply was too great. Kawasaki's KX125-B1 had come so far in the last year and stopped so close to being the fastest, smoothest, *best* 125 ever offered for sale, we just couldn't fight the urge to push it over the line. And with the '83 models waiting just over the horizon, it would have to be pushed *well* over the line. So we attacked the KX on two fronts, hitting both of its weak points in an attempt to transform it into both the fastest and the best-suspended 125 on the track.

Klemm Research handled the first half of the program. Team Green, Kawasaki's amateur support program, recommends the Klemm KX125 Horsepower Kit for its riders who plan to race non-stock machinery. The kit consists of porting, head modification, an airbox with a spare element, and jetting changes. And the kit carries a suggested retail price of $260 plus the shipping costs of your head and barrel.

The cash outlay continued for the suspension modifications. Works Performance Products will perform its heart-transplant operation on any Uni-Trak shock for $175. Works removes the stock flexible-disc valving and replaces it with a poppet-valve damping system. And a larger-capacity aluminum reservoir that uses a polyurethane bladder replaces the stock deCarbon free-piston reservoir.

One of the most important advantages of the Works shock modification is that the damping is custom-tailored to a specific rider's weight and style. It's unlikely that a 130-pound Pro and a 180-pound Novice will agree on the ideal suspension, so most manufacturers are forced to make compromises and guess at the size and skill of its target buyer. With a custom-built shock, no guessing is involved.

Both Works and Klemm performed their respective modifications on our test bike in short order, so there was little down-time. Once the bike was fitted with Dunlop's latest moto-knobbies—a K139 up front and a K138 in the rear—it was time for the KX to show what it could do.

As it turned out, the Klemm/Works KX125 can do quite a lot, for it's the hottest 125 this side of Jeff Ward's factory bike. The engine modifications changed the B1 from a mid-range machine to a hyper-horsepower screamer. The KX's ignition has a built-in rev limiter, so the porting couldn't increase the maximum rpm; but the modified engine produces so much horsepower up to that point that the rpm limit is no problem. There is a trade-off, though: The Klemm kit shaves off some of the KX's bottom end, thus amplifying the KX's already-abrupt power-delivery characteristics. On most tracks, though, the Klemm machine compensates with sheer horsepower and outruns other 125s like they were tied to the starting gate.

The only other reservation we have concerns the construction of the kit's airbox. Its outside vents allow an unrestricted flow of air, but water can enter just as easily. And mounting the airbox was made difficult by a poor fit and flimsy construction.

We had no such problems with the suspension modifications. We had expected the heavier test riders to be more comfortable with the Works shock because it was set for a 165-pound Intermediate rider. What surprised us was that even lightweight test riders liked the reworked shock better than the stocker. The Uni-Trak became smooth throughout its travel, and when it bottomed, it did so without the clunk that threw the stocker off course.

The Works shock and the Klemm engine combine to make the KX a serious performer, but the total bill for that hop-up is $455, not including $68 for the K138 and $66 for the K139. When tacked onto the KX's $1629 suggested retail price, that makes for a stiff buy-in. And the machine won't be suitable for everyone, especially beginners, who will be better off to leave the engine, at least, stock. But for an experienced rider, the KX has the potential to knock everything else off the track. And that's worth the entry fee.

You can create the same machine by contacting Klemm Research, Dept. CG, 6657 Palma Circle, Yorba Linda, California 92686; (714) 970-5299; and Works Performance Products, Dept. CG, 8730 Shirley St., Northridge, California 91324 (213) 701-1010. —*Ron Lawson*

© 1982 DAVID DEWHURST

We teach the Kawasaki KX125-B1 how to dis-RM the 125cc motocross class

Just supply some magic beans and watch it turn into a giant-killer.

Continued

COMPARISON MINITEST:

Kawasaki KX125 vs. Suzuki RM125

Kawasaki takes on the odds.

• Buying a Suzuki RM125 is like betting on the National League in the All-Star game: You're just not risking much. It's always close, but year after year, the Suzuki is the most potent motocrosser in the 125 class. And year after year, there's always another challenger that has all the features and all the potential to top the RM in performance—although so far it just hasn't happened.

But perhaps the Suzuki's time has come. The new Kawasaki KX125-B1 is the best motocrosser Kawasaki has ever produced, and of this year's batch of machinery, it has the best shot at unseating the RM as *the* 125 to own. The KX is a new motorcycle that shares almost no parts with last year's air-cooled machine, while the Suzuki is little more than a warmed-over '81 model.

Suzuki has made some changes, though. This year's RM engine breathes through a new intake system. After years of using the Power Reed design—which consists of a piston-controlled intake port combined with a reed-valved passage leading directly into the crankcase—the new RM has a more conventional eight-petal full-reed system. Suzuki claims the new arrangement doesn't produce as much turbulence in the intake tract and crankcase, resulting in more power.

And the Suzuki does, in fact, pull harder at both ends of its powerband. Last year, it already was one of the strongest and smoothest-accelerating 125s on the track, and now those assets have been strengthened. But the newest Kawasaki is a powerful bike, too; in fact it's every bit as strong as the Suzuki. Neither bike has a significant advantage in a first-turn dragrace, although if given enough room, the RM might pull a wheel ahead, but only when topped out. The overall gear ratios are almost identical, but the RM's sixth is slightly taller.

Motocross goes past the first-turn race, though, and the Suzuki's power curve proves

SUZUKI RM125Z

Importer: U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation
3251 East Imperial Highway
Brea, California 92621

Category	motocross
Suggested retail price	$1659
Engine type	liquid-cooled two-stroke vertical single
Port arrangement	one reed-valve-controlled intake, six transfers, one exhaust
Bore and stroke	54.0mm x 54.0mm
Displacement	123.7cc
Compression ratio (corrected)	8.5:1
Carburetion	one 32mm Mikuni slide/needle
Gearbox	6-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	Kayaba air-spring, 38mm stanchion tube diameter/11.2 in. (285mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	single Kayaba shock, 22mm spring preload adj., 4-way adj. rebound damping/ 12.6 in. (319mm)
Wheelbase	56.5 to 57.6 in. (1436 to 1463mm)
Seat height	37.1 in. (943mm)
Weight	197 lbs. (89kg)
Top speed (calculated)	70 mph (112 km/h)
Warranty	none
Available color	yellow only

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 BRUCE HAMILTON

©1982 PAUL DEAN

Suzuki's RM125 has had the class to itself for five motocross seasons

But the KX has sliced through the pack to make the closest challenge yet.

to be an advantage during a long moto. The KX revs more quickly but has an abrupt power delivery at low rpm. The Suzuki is, by 125 standards, a slow revver, and it's the RM's gradual power delivery that puts it in front. While the KX is spinning and the rider is fanning the clutch in an attempt to keep the machine at the right rpm, the Suzuki is smoothly putting all of its power on the track. And on top, the Kawasaki signs off abruptly, while a few more revs can be squeezed out of the Suzuki. The RM doesn't mind being revved past the limit. Its best power, though, is in the upper-middle rpm zone. As long as the rider doesn't make any *big* mistakes, he'll never fall off either end of the RM's power curve, and he won't even have to touch the clutch. With the RM, clutch-fanning is strictly optional.

But even though the RM's engine is more controllable, the Kawasaki is an easier machine to ride. One reason for this is the KX's stoppability. The Kawasaki front disc brake makes slowing down an effortless task, even though it's mated to a mediocre rear brake. Both Suzuki brakes require some serious pressure before you can get the bike stopped.

But a much greater factor in the KX's manageability is its stable, secure-feeling handling. The Suzuki is by no means squirrelly, but, in spite of having very similar frame geometry, it lacks the confidence-inspiring steadiness of the KX, both on the straights and in the turns. Pushing the KX through a turn is easy. It seems able to hold any line, no matter how tight or how rough.

One reason might be the difference in the suspension of the two machines. The Suzuki is stiffer at both ends, and that can cause small bumps and grooves to push the bike off its given line. But the RM's suspension can handle the rough sections of the course with incredible ease. It's almost as if the bumps and whoops shrink in size for the Suzuki and then grow larger for everthing else—including the KX. The Suzuki is sprung best for riders of approximately 150 pounds, but those weighing up to 180 pounds can easily adapt to it. The Full Floater bottoms, but it happens so smoothly the rider doesn't really know for sure when he has run out of travel. When the KX bottoms, it lets everyone know with a sharp clunk.

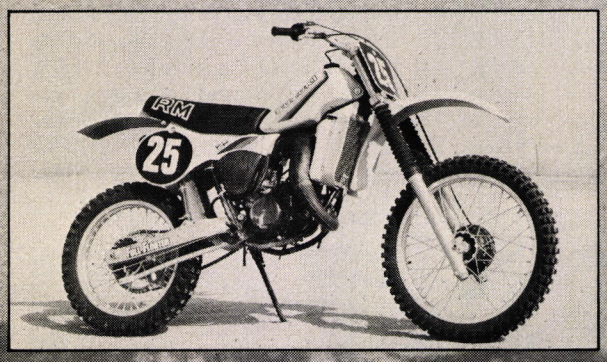
The forks on both bikes are Kayaba-made and similar in performance. The Kawasaki's stanchion tubes are three millimeters larger in diameter and flex less than the Suzuki's, but the difference is a fine one.

Suzuki chose to retain 38mm fork stanchions in order to keep the machine's weight to a minimum. And the RM is lighter than the Kawasaki, although both machines have lost weight this year. Much of the Suzuki's weight reduction came from its shock, which has a smaller body and shaft this year. The smaller shaft has a side benefit of less seal friction. Suzuki shaved off more weight through a remarkable amount of attention to detail. The levers, for example, are hollow on the ends and around the pivots. And many of the bolts throughout the machine also have been hollowed or drilled out. None of those details seem to have an adverse affect on reliability, though.

But there seems to be a slight inconsistency when you compare Suzuki's miserly attention to weight-saving details with its overcomplicated airbox. The RM actually has two separate airboxes, each with its own hinged door and two-stage filter. And the filters have slightly different shapes, so should you get the left and right side swapped, the engine will breathe dirt and chew itself up.

That, however, is a relatively small complaint in light of the Suzuki's performance as a package. It has more of the power and suspension that has kept it on top of the 125 class for years. The KX's handling and brakes make it the closest challenger yet; but in the hypercompetitive world of 125cc motocross, close isn't good enough. When it comes to the checkered flag, the Kawasaki is just another second-place finisher. And the Suzuki RM125 remains the safest bet in motocross.

—Ron Lawson



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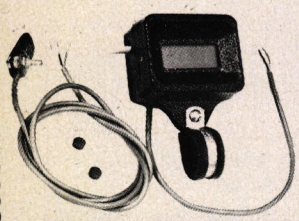

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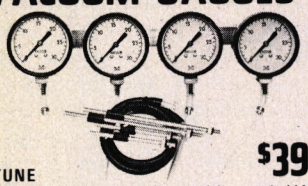

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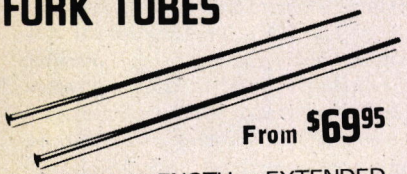

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PRODUCT EVALUATION:

Elite Tri-Dent MX Gloves

A sugarless solution to the damaged-digit dilemma.

• Next time you shake hands with an accomplished dirt-bike rider, chances are that you'll notice three things: 1) His hands are big/strong; 2) his hands are calloused; and 3) he more than likely has at least one finger—probably a little finger—that has been permanently damaged in some way as the result of an off-road crash.

That's the opinion of the people at Elite USA, at least, especially the part about the little finger. Those outermost digits can be extremely vulnerable to injury in the event of a get-off, since they're right out at the ends of the grips (usually the first things to hit the dirt) and can easily get poked into or under a rock or root or some other unfriendly object in the vicinity of Ground Zero. And that is what led Elite to the development of the 793 Tri-Dent, an off-road glove that houses both the little finger and the ring finger of each hand in the same compartment. The idea is that the little finger will be less prone to getting snagged on something if it isn't dangling out there alone.

Except for having one less finger receptacle per hand, though, the Tri-Dents are a lot like numerous other MX-style gloves currently on the market. They use a free-breathing nylon waffle material on the back, topped with high-density protective foam padding. The curved palms have soft leather on the outside and padding on the inside, and the stretch-knit cuffs seal tightly around the wrists to keep out dirt, mud and sand.

As all-purpose off-road gloves, the Tri-Dents function superbly. They're light, rugged, cool, well-made and—if you're not averse to palm padding—quite comfortable. And the only time you're aware of having two fingers living in the same compartment is when you deliberately think about it. But since it's impractical, if not impossible, for us to do crash-testing, we can't quantify just how much added little-finger protection, if any, the 793s provide. About all we can say is that since keeping those two fingers together does no harm, we can't fault the idea, for under the right circumstances it just might do some good—especially for someone who's prone to little-finger injuries.

Tri-Dents are available through motorcycle dealerships everywhere for $27.95 in red and white, yellow and white, or white and blue, in sizes CL (child's large), XS, S, M, L and XL. For more information, write Elite USA, 1252 East 5375 South, Ogden, Utah 84403, or call (801) 479-1207.

—Paul Dean

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Elite's Tri-Dent 793 motocross glove with a lobster-claw look

It's Elite's way of preventing your little finger from being pinched.

11 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report DEC. '81.

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Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

MINITEST:

Yamaha's XS400J Maxim shows off its Special lineage

And its new-generation DOHC twin-cylinder engine, as well.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1982 VIC HUBER

Yamaha XS400 Maxim

One medium Special; hold the warts.

• Ever since the sales success of Yamaha's 400 and 650 Specials in the late Seventies, motorcyclists have been inundated with cruiser bikes from every corner. And almost every example of the genre has shared a common problem: The cruiser styling got in the way of function. The pullback bars and the low, stepped saddles which were so accommodating on the showroom floor often compromised both comfort and control out on the open road—and the world is a larger place than the dealer's showroom. So, since Yamaha capitalized on the trend, it seems only fitting that Yamaha should alter it—by producing a factory custom, but minus the warts. For an example, one need look no further than the XS400J Maxim.

In redirecting the trend, Yamaha revised its approach. The first Specials were bolt-on customs, standard bikes with different bars, seat and tank. The Maxim, however, was designed from the ground up to have a cruiser seating position, and as such, it fares better than most examples of the breed. The handlebar is only mildly swept back, the footpegs do not pretend to highway-pegdom, and in short, the seating position is not far removed from that of a standard motorcycle. The saddle itself, however, suffers a problem common to many cruiser-bike seats: It's thinly padded, and the step limits the rider's movement. Still, the low saddle height (30.6 inches) does allow shorter riders to touch the ground flat-footed when at a stop.

Getting the littlest Maxim going is another matter, though. The new DOHC twin-cylinder engine requires several minutes of warm-up before it will respond cleanly to throttle input, and even when it's warmed, there's a lean spot in the carburetion directly off of idle. As a result, the best technique for taking off in first gear requires lots of throttle to get past that soft spot in the engine's response. Past that point, however, power delivery is smooth and predictable all the way up to the 10,000-rpm redline.

And that's a good thing, because to make much headway in traffic means using most of the available rpm; the Maxim needs to be wound up tight to produce serious acceleration. But thanks to the gear-driven counterbalancer located in front of the plain-bearing crankshaft, use of the top-weighted powerband doesn't bring with it the penalty of excessive vibration. The engine is smoothest around 6000 rpm, which in fifth gear corresponds to 55 mph.

Despite the high-tech look of the Maxim's Monoshock rear suspension, the 400's ride quality is only middle-of-the-road. If that road is smooth, so is the ride; severe pavement irregularities, however, can overwhelm the suspension, delivering sharp jolts to the rider through the seat and handlebar. Grabbing a handful of the strong, predictable brakes can also overtax the front suspension, bottoming the fork with an audible clunk.

The Maxim's front end is also the source of a minor wobble, both in a straight line when traveling in excess of 85-90 mph, and during vigorous cornering at lower speeds. The wobble isn't dangerous, just unsettling, and it

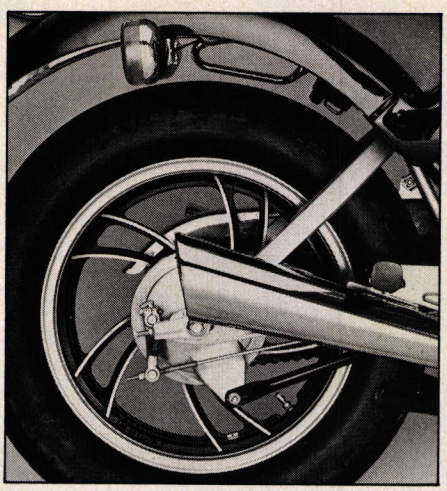
YAMAHA XS400J MAXIM

Importer: Yamaha Motor Corporation, USA
6555 Katella Avenue
Cypress, California 90630

Category	street
Suggested retail price	$1899
Engine type	four-stroke vertical twin
Valve arrangement	double overhead camshafts
Bore and stroke	69.0mm x 53.4mm
Displacement	399.4cc
Compression ratio	9.7:1
Carburetion	two 34mm Mikuni constant-vacuum
Gearbox	5-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	Showa, 35mm stanchion tube diameter/5.0 in. (127mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	single Yamaha shock, 6-way adjustable spring preload/ 3.5 in. (90mm)
Wheelbase	53.8 to 55.0 in. (1366 to 1397mm)
Seat height	30.6 in. (772mm)
Weight	376 lbs. (171kg)
Best 1/4-mile acceleration	14.651 sec., 88.06 mph (142 km/h)
Top speed (calculated at redline)	104 mph (167 km/h)
Stopping distance from 60 mph	136 ft. (41m)
Fuel consumption	52 to 61 mpg (22 to 26 km/l)
Warranty	6 months unlimited mileage
Available color	black only

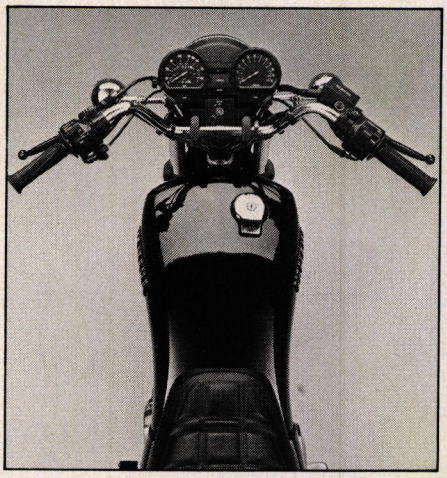
serves to more closely define the Maxim 400's performance. This motorcycle was never meant to be a canyon-charger—and neither does it encourage such antics.

In the Maxim 400, Yamaha has produced a motorcycle that is unremarkable in many respects. It turns, stops and goes adequately but not brilliantly. It is a median motorcycle that nicely fills the role of the rational custom. But in doing so, the Maxim has pigeonholed itself in a category that is neither full-blown custom nor plain-vanilla standard. Add to that the fact that the littlest Maxim is a 400 competing against 450s, and the bike's most memorable feature becomes its non-threatening, appliance-like quality. And for some, that's not enough. —*Charles Everitt*



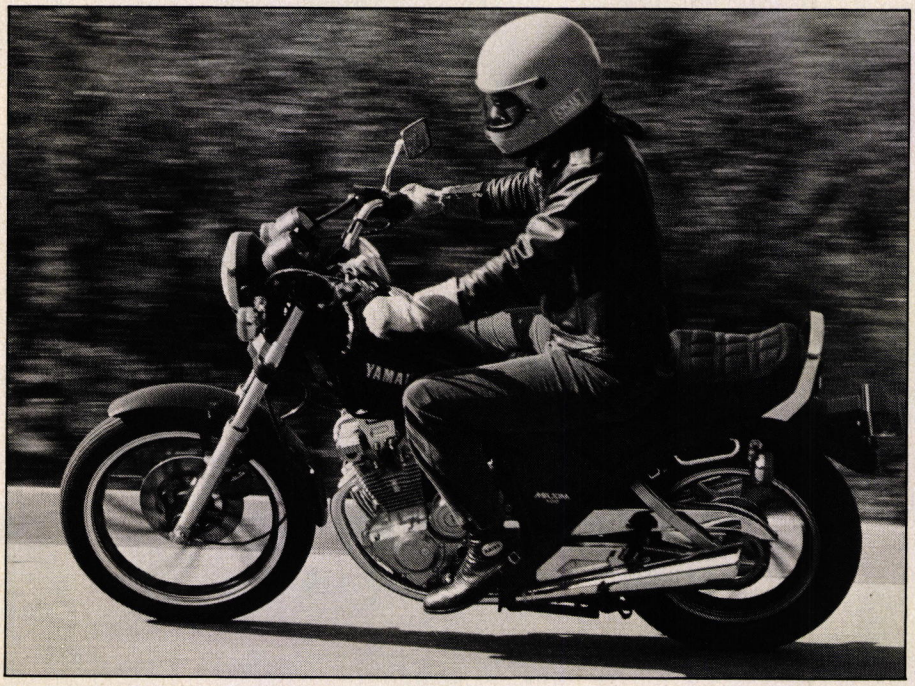
Rear end has custom-standard 16-inch tire

And a middle-of-the-road monoshock.



Handlebar has minimal pullback

It won't cramp your style or your wrists.



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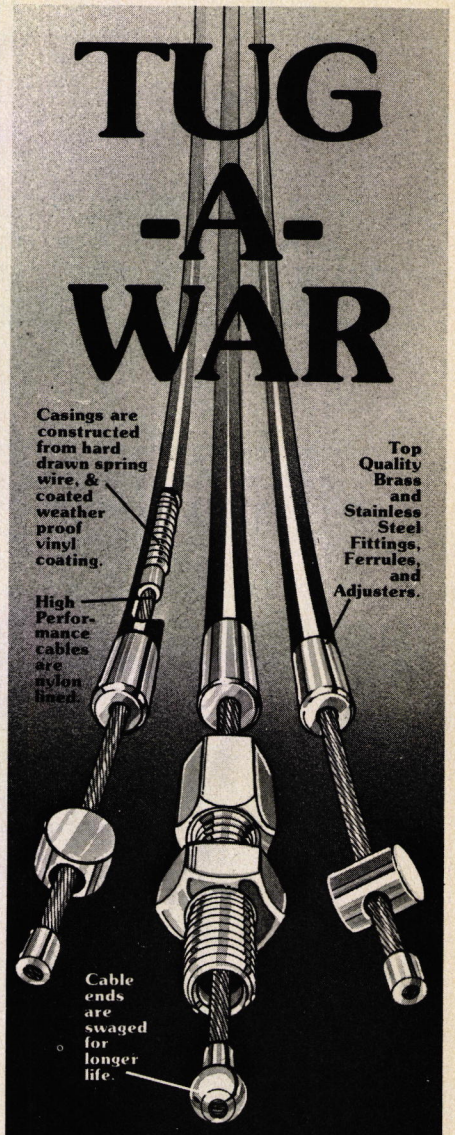
The XS400J in its element: low-speed cruising

Yamaha revises the Special concept and comes up with the rational custom.

TUG -A- WAR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SPORT LINES

Cycle Guide's True Tales of Race Courses, Dark Horses and Machines at Speed

EDITED BY DAIN GINGERELLI

52nd Dutch TT

More than a race, and more than 150,000 fans.

• Jack Middleburg shows little emotion, typically. He's a tactical roadracer who handles his 500cc machine well under any conditions—rain or shine. But each June, when the GP circus swings through Holland, his home country, he gets nervous. Although he won there in 1980, before practice for the 1982 Dutch TT, Middleburg was concerned. "Assen is a difficult circuit," he said, "because it's longer than most other tracks. But it's most difficult for me, because it's my home country, and there are many people here. There's lots of pressure on me at this race."

Many people, indeed. While there is no official spectator count for the Assen race, most

PHOTOGRAPHY ©1982 RICH CHENET

insiders reckon there are more than 150,000 present for the Dutch TT; others suggest 200,000 is more like it.

In any case, each year more people attend the Dutch TT than perhaps any other motorcycle race in the world. Even practice is a big deal at Assen; more than 40,000 people crowded the bleachers just to watch time trials. As further proof of Dutch roadrace enthusiasm, 30,000 grandstand seats sold out 11 months *before* the race. And they all came to cheer Jumpin' Jack Middleburg and fellow countryman, Boet van Dulmen. Van Dulmen, whom the factories recently have recognized as a world-class talent, doesn't feel the same crowd pressure at Assen that Middleburg does, however. "Their enthusiasm," he boasted, "makes me go faster." He added, "This is the best race in Europe."

Foreign riders, too, have a fondness for Assen. Freddie Spencer, a rookie on the circuit

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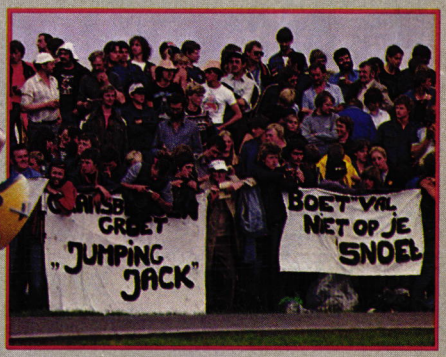
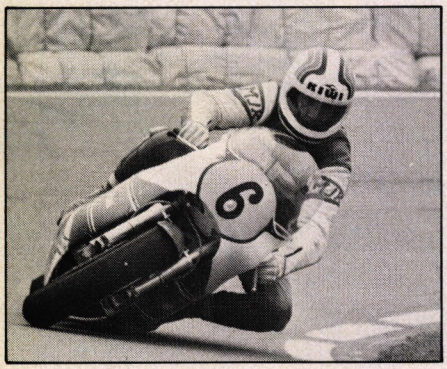


The GP circus turns Assen into a haven for almost half a million motorcycle enthusiasts. Ron Haslam and the Honda NR500 lead a quartet of two-strokes through the chicane, while Kenny Roberts maintains first place until a crash forces him and Graeme Crosby to walk back to the pits in the rain.

The quiet town of Assen

Filled with bikes on race weekend.



Dutchman Boet van Dulmen

The fans are his horsepower.

Uncini lands a knee

And wins the race.

this year, felt right at home at the TT—even without his Dr. Pepper. "Everyone (the fans) knows you here," he said. "It's great." And two-time United States Road Racing Champion Rich Schlachter said, "The Dutch enthusiasm is great. They (the spectators) are well-informed about racing." Schlachter rides his own TZ250 in the quarter-liter world championship and is well-respected by the Europeans as one of the world's better 250-class riders.

The Dutch zealots have gained their road-race knowledge through many years as fans; this was the 52nd Dutch TT. The inaugural event was in 1925, but because racing was forbidden in Holland then, the TT was a reliability road test, not a race. The next year the competition ban was lifted and Assen became a speed contest. The 1926 races were run over a typical course for the period, incorporating public roads, and this tradition continues; the present course, opened in 1955, uses public highways for approximately 60 percent of its length.

Dutch motorcyclists are proud of their track, too; in part, because it's the only race of the GP series that includes every FIM class: 50cc, 125cc, 250cc, 350cc, 500cc and sidecars are all part of the Assen program. And not catering to auto racing—nearby Zandvoort is for that—has helped preserve the track's pavement, and that's another source of pride.

But even with its smooth surface, Assen is a tough place at which to race. Each lap is more than four miles long, with 21 turns connected by kinks and dog-legs that, as Barry Sheene said, "keep you off the saddle most of the time because you're throwing the bike from side to side."

The track is mentally demanding, too. The long straights lead into both 90-degree and hairpin turns, and because there is little change in elevation, depth perception can be a problem—especially at 150 miles per hour. Schlachter, who does exceptionally well on Daytona's flat infield, doesn't take Assen lightly. "The long, flat straights make it difficult to judge the turns," he explained.

The Dutch are known for their dykes and canals, and you'd expect Assen to have good water drainage, which it does. Kenny Roberts, however, who adjusts well to any track, doesn't care for the camber changes in Assen's turns. "Each side of the track is angled for drainage," he said, "and that makes cornering a guessing game. Especially if you can't see the edge of the track, which often happens since it's narrow, and other riders can block your view."

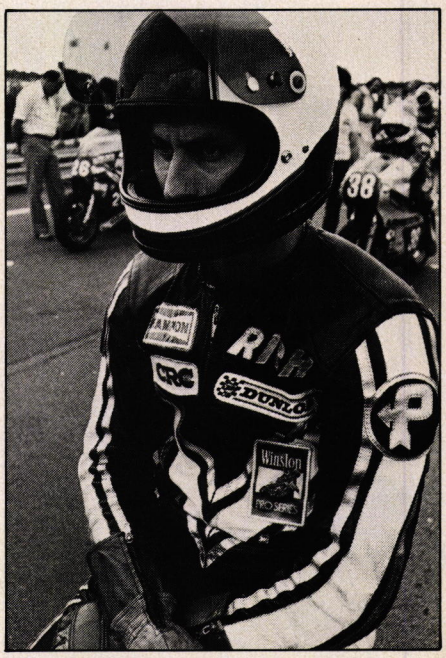
Those same bi-cambered turns were Roberts' Waterloo when the rain came down while he led the race. Roberts' Yamaha aquaplaned, and he crashed on the seventh lap. His bike caught fire but was quickly extinguished. Fellow Yamaha rider Graeme Crosby went down nearby, and both riders walked back to the pits under the pelting rainstorm. Fortunately for them the race was stopped, but not until Spencer also fell, without injury. But the break in the action gave Roberts and Crosby time to have their bikes repaired for the restart.

Finishing positions were determined by the riders' placing on lap six, and rather than use the traditional elapsed time system, FIM officials decided to restart the race and base overall scoring on aggregate finishes. So Suzuki-mounted Franco Uncini's 2-1 day gave him first overall, while Roberts was second (1-3). KR wasn't disappointed, however: "Actually, I was lucky for the restart," he said, "otherwise I would have DNFed." Sheene finished third with Crosby fourth.

Middleburg had reason to be disappointed, however. He inherited the lead from Roberts on lap seven in the first race and appeared headed for his second Dutch TT win, but the red flag cut short his show. And Jumpin' Jack crashed in the second heat, while van Dulmen finished sixth on his Yamaha.

And for the more than 150,000 Dutch road-race fans, the rainstorm was like a seasonal baptism. For them, there is no place more sacred than Assen during the TT. And you can't argue with more than 150,000 zealots, either.

—Dain Gingerelli



Rich Schlachter on the Assen grid

Enthusiastic about the enthusiasm.

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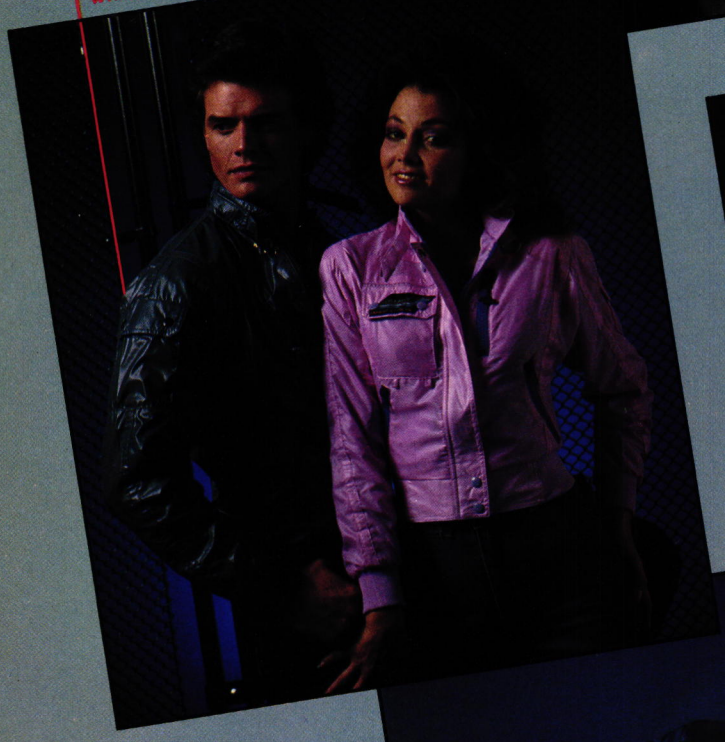
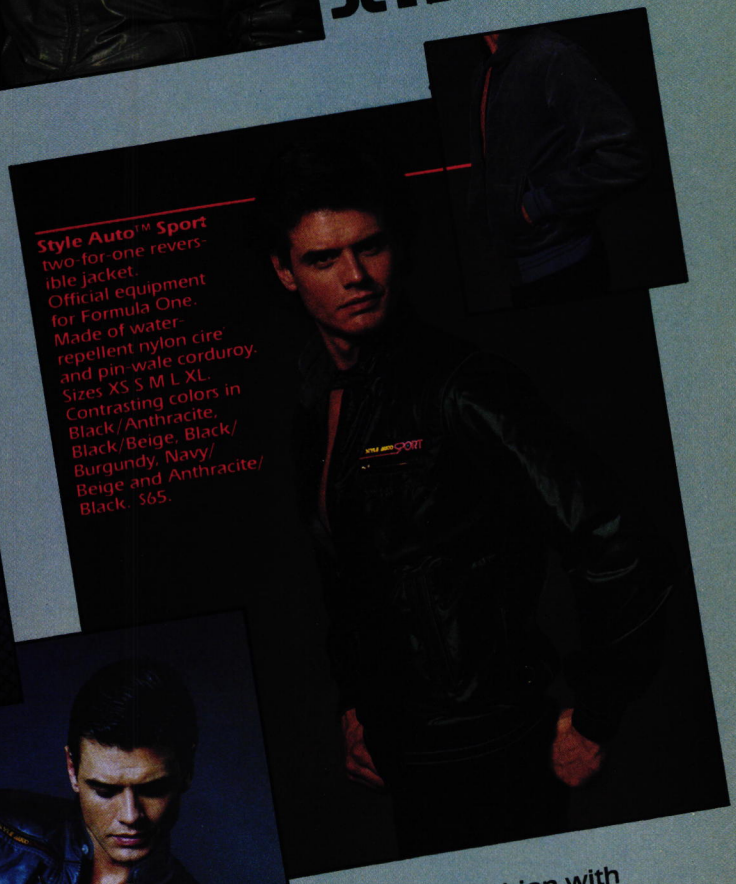
Style Auto™ Carerra design world champion jacket (below), the proven endurance winner, in water-repellent nylon cire'. Lightweight yet warm with seven functional pockets. Sizes XS S M L XL. Black, Navy, Red, Silver, White and Anthracite. $55.





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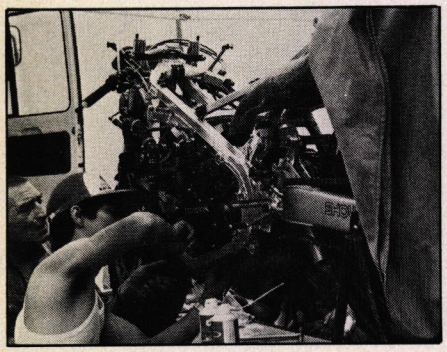
• Spies are shrewd people; they steal information, and sell it—for a price. But spies also make 500cc GP roadracing much more interesting, because the factory teams in that tight-knit community never willingly show their equipment. The factory bikes' fairings are for more than streamlining and sponsor billboards; they're also shields to protect the corporate secrets invested in the racebikes they shroud. Not surprisingly, most professional race photographers try all kinds of tricks to invade this privacy.

It's become somewhat of a game, too, for the team mechanics to elude the photographers' lenses. For example, one spy photographer who scouted the Yamaha tent during the Assen TT found what looked like a weak link in the Yamaha pit defense: There was a loose flap in the tent that garaged the highly guarded OW61 between practice sessions. The spy quickly returned with his camera, ready for the turkey-shoot. He lifted the flap only to find that the mechanics had stacked tool boxes and spare fairings in front of the tent opening: No picture.

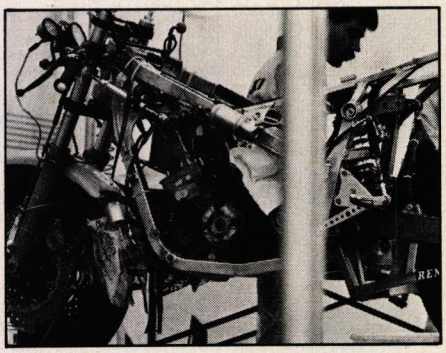
At Laguna Seca, another clandestine cameraman tried the direct approach. He positioned himself in focal range of the OW61 on the pre-grid, then aimed. He decided to shoot down into the exposed area behind the fairing, while tuner Kel Carruthers held the bike for Kenny Roberts before practice. As the sneak shutter-clicker retold the story: "I couldn't focus—Carruthers kept rocking the bike back and forth, keeping it out of range."

Still, spies do manage to provide film footage of bare-bones GP bikes. But whether or not you learn any high-tech secrets is up to your roving eye—and what's exposed. The spies? They're discreetly making withdrawals from their bank accounts. *—Dain Gingerelli*



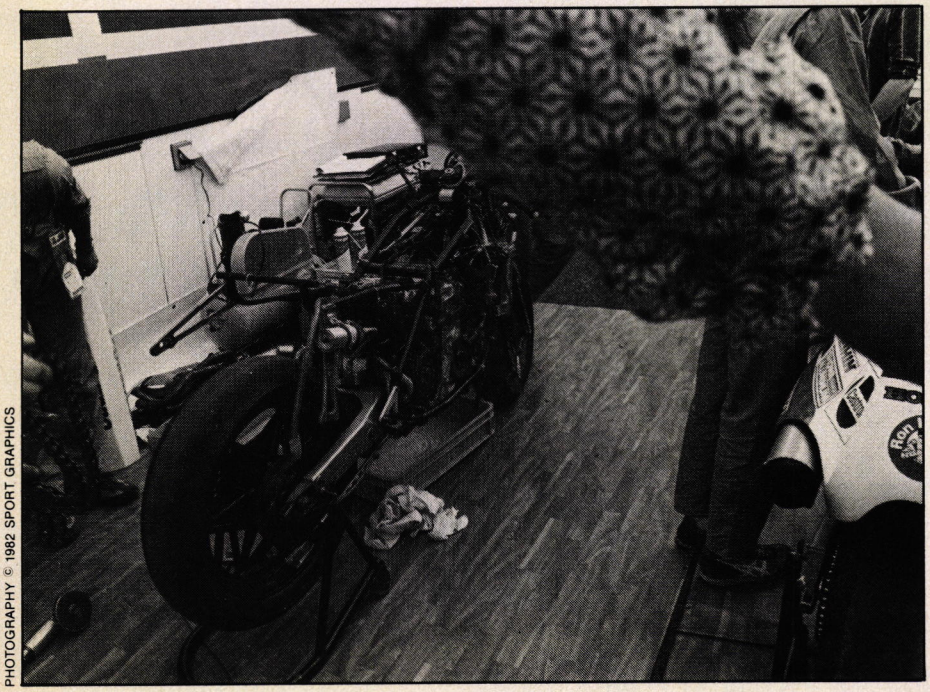
Intrusion in the Honda pits

The camera outdraws the hand.



Randy Mamola's Suzuki Gamma Mk. II

Gussets and gussets of tricktanium.



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Pit Bits

Bad Brad in Europe

Leading the pack in the end.

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• You can exhale now: Brad Lackey accomplished his 11-year quest, and won the 500cc motocross world championship. Lackey and his Suzuki wrapped up the title at the Luxembourg GP, the final race of the season, by placing second behind dual-moto winner Hakan Carlqvist. Lackey is the first American to win an FIM individual motocross championship, and the sixth American to become a two-wheeled world champion. He joins Jack Milne, Steve Baker, Kenny Roberts, Bernie Schreiber and Bruce Penhall in the Yank hall of world-beaters.

• Four-star rating: In another American triumph, speedway racers Bruce Penhall, Dennis Sigalos, Bobby Schwartz and Kelly Moran won the World Team Final. They were the first Yanks to win the four-man championship, too. Later this year Penhall and Sigalos will compete in the World Pair Final, which Penhall and Schwartz won last year.

• National champs: Honda's Donnie Hansen won the stadiumcross championship by placing sixth at the Last Superbowl of Motocross. A few weeks later, teammate Darrell Shultz won the 500cc National title, while Suzuki's Mark Barnett copped his third straight 125cc crown.

• It's time to relax: Sources say Miller High Life Beer will sponsor all the 1983 supercross *races*, while the indoor *series* will continue to wear the Wrangler brand.

• One beer stands clear: Miller High Life is giving away motocross mad money and Johnny O'Mara got his at the Last Superbowl by vaulting his Honda 71 feet 3 inches to win the Miller High Life Jump. It was the longest aerial act of the evening, netting O'Mara $500. Johnny O must have thought the drinks were on the house.

• CHiP off the old block: Bruce Penhall has announced his retirement from British League speedway racing. Penhall said he would limit his track appearances to selected events, leaving him free to pursue an acting career with the television series

CHiPs. Penhall did well in his screen tests, and the series' producers want to use him in forthcoming shows.

• Oh Bo: Bo O'Brochta collected the largest cash pay-out in motorcycle drag-racing by winning the Gateway Supernationals in St. Louis, Missouri. According to AMA-DRAGBIKE, sanctioners of the event, O'Brochta was paid $2000 cash following his elimination of Steve Suter in the Top Fuel final.

• Add Vance to six seconds: Terry Vance did it; he turned a time of 6.98 seconds, with a top speed of 203.61 mph. Vance, aboard the Vance/Hines Top Fuel Suzuki, made the run during a test session at Orange County International Raceway. The time isn't a record, but it's certainly a preview of things to come.

• Designer leathers: The old guard might have been openly critical of Steve Wise's motocross trappings (and riding style) at the Houston TT last February, but times—and opinions—have changed. No fewer than three mainstream AMA Class C riders—Steve Eklund, Steve Morehead and Terry Poovey—showed up for the Peoria TT wearing Wise-fashioned MX duds. They claimed the lightweight gear was cooler for the August race. Regardless, Randy Goss won the event wearing his hefty black, white and orange leathers. His bike? A Harley-Davidson XR750, of course.

• Honda XR750: Rumors leaking from Honda's race shop indicate the Big H will have an air-cooled vee-twin 750 for next season's Winston Pro Series. Our spy hints there are 25 of the specially made Hondas awaiting homologation.

• Baldwin returns: Honda's roadrace effort is steamrolling forward, thanks to Mike Baldwin. The New Englander's making a successful AMA comeback with Honda, scoring two roadrace doubles in a row. The first was Pocono, then Sears Point, taking both F1 and Superbike events. His Pocono Superbike win was clouded by a protest from Kawasaki, however, which claimed he'd used a non-approved front tire. Baldwin appealed, and the protest is being investigated by the AMA. Meanwhile, Wayne Rainey was declared the race winner.

—Dain Gingerelli

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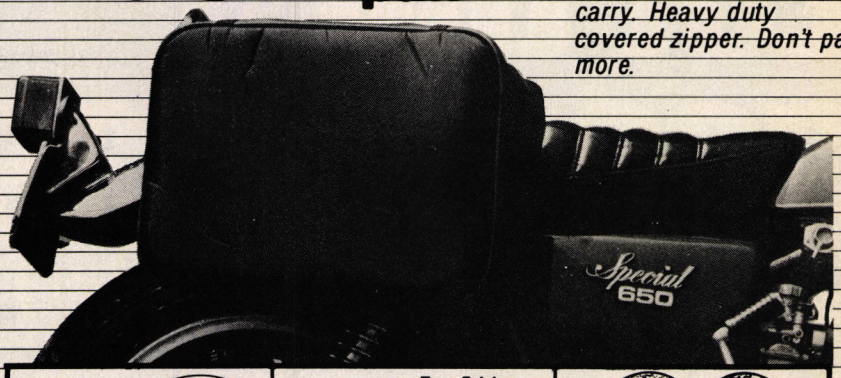

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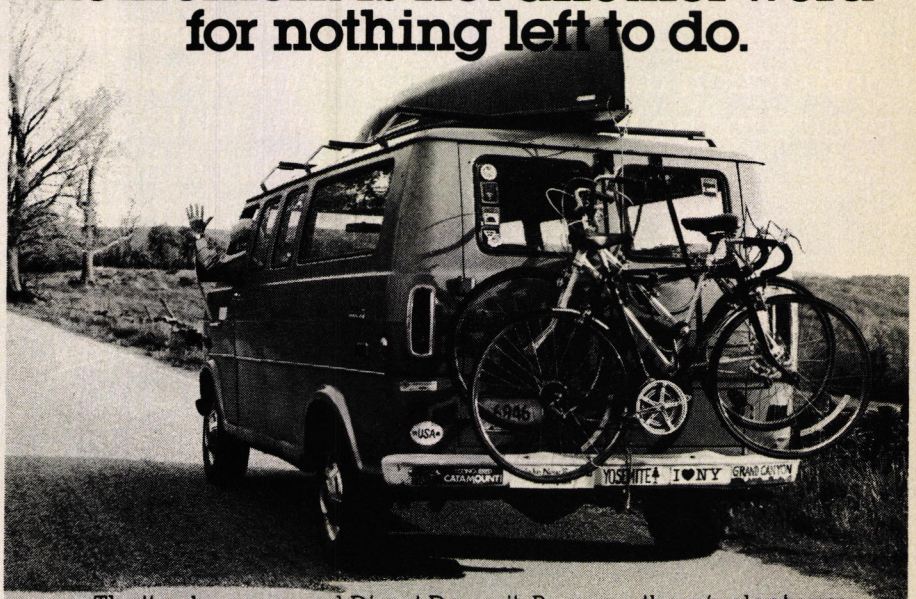

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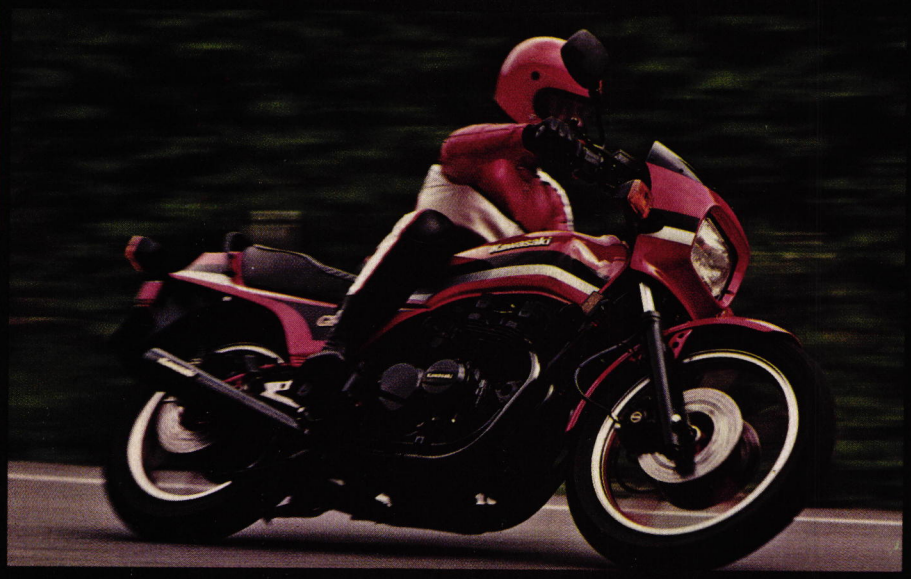

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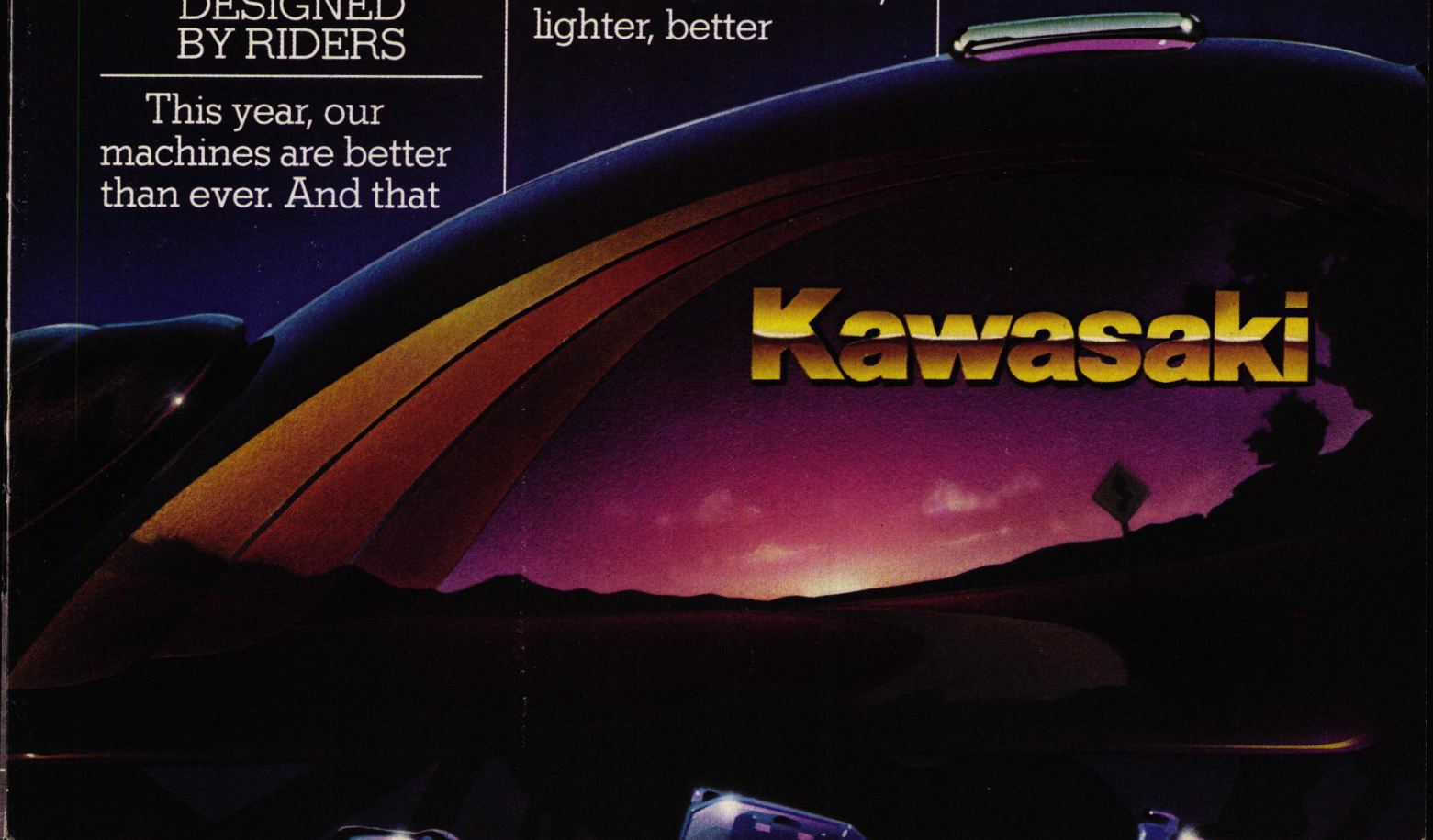

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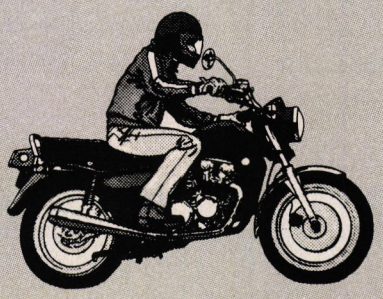

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Winners & Losers

The Last Superbowl of Motocross

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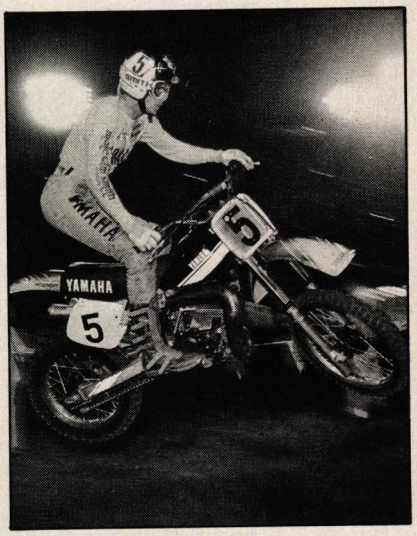

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Bell flings his air-cooled Yamaha

Riding tall in the saddle to first.

• It was a show to end all shows. Fireworks exploded during the national anthem, and as the riders lined up for the start of the first heat, a pre-recorded drumroll loudly echoed through the Coliseum's public address system.

Announcer Larry Huffman howled about the forthcoming race, and the crowd—65,604 people—stood up for the start. When the gate dropped, 20 brightly hued motocross bikes dashed for Turn One, with Jeff Ward and his new liquid-cooled Kawasaki leading the bunch.

The *Last* Superbowl of Motocross was starting. It was the beginning of the end.

The 1982 race was fittingly named, too, because it was, indeed, the last Superbowl of Motocross to be held in the Los Angeles Coliseum, where the race has been a motofixture since 1972 when Mike Goodwin got the crazy notion to promote a motocross race on a football field.

Now, 11 years later, the Coliseum Commission—with leverage from the United States Olympic Committee—has asked Goodwin to take his race elsewhere. Reason: The artificial running track to be installed for the 1984 Olympic Games would be too sensitive—and too costly—to dump tons of dirt on. Before the race,

Goodwin was told that the 1982 Superbowl contract would be the last.

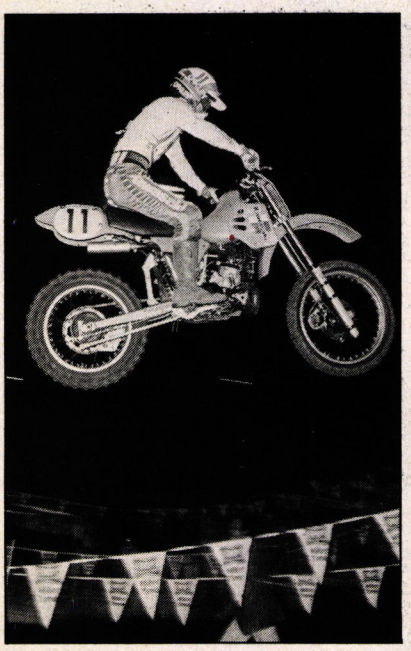
Goodwin was only momentarily outflanked. Rather than witness the Superbowl's demise, he simply followed the Los Angeles Rams' lead and found another complex. Anaheim Stadium was nearby, but it was already the site of the season-opener Miller High Life Supercross, and he wanted to keep the Anaheim race separate from the Superbowl. The new location for the granddaddy of stadiumcross, he decided, would be Pasadena's Rose Bowl, just down the freeway.

But Goodwin's troubles are only half over. He's been granted a race date, but it's only a tentative one: sometime in July or August. A firm date will be decided after the newly formed United States Football League formulates a schedule for this spring and summer. So once again the Superbowl of Motocross must take a back seat to another sport.

Goodwin thinks that will soon change, however. Looking into his crystal ball, he foresees stadium motocross racing becoming the largest motorsport in America, surpassing NASCAR stock-car racing, the acknowledged king to date.

He is so sure of his prophecy that he boasts of a 1985 schedule of 20 to 25 races across the country. It's a tall order, and one many insiders feel the industry can't handle. They claim the factories don't have the resources to support teams competing on that level *and* the AMA National outdoor series.

The people at Stadium Motorsports—promoter of the Superbowl and other stadiumcross races—see the future differently. Rather than depend on direct factory involvement in the year-round se-



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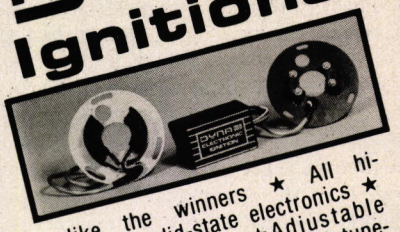

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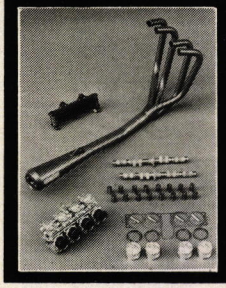

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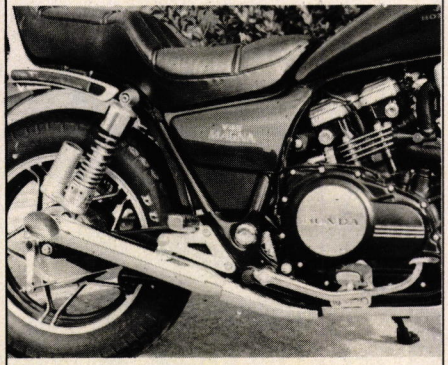

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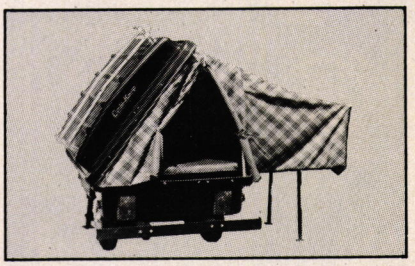

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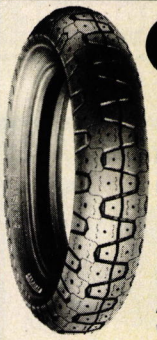

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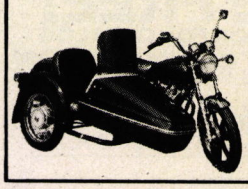

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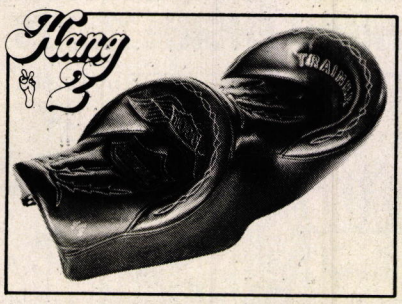

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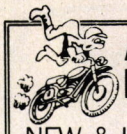

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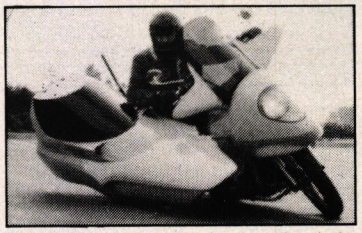

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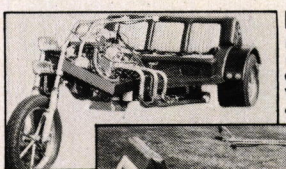

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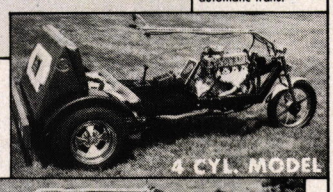

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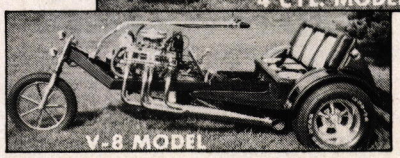

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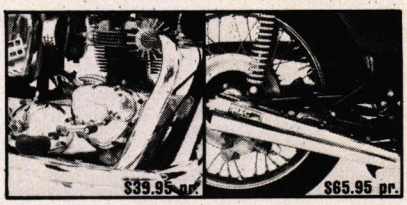

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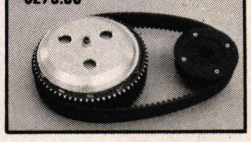

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ries, they believe stadiumcross teams of the future will pattern themselves after NASCAR teams. "NASCAR had factory involvement in its early years, but the factories pulled out," said Stadium Motorsports' Jean Sleeper. "However," she added, "NASCAR racing was so popular and attractive to companies wanting to advertise that the independent teams were able to get sponsorship to continue racing; now teams *buy* their own cars, *buy* their own parts. We foresee that happening to stadiumcross, too.

"Network television will play an important role, too, in promoting the sport," she said. Stadium Motorsports already has NBC network coverage for the Anaheim race, and CBS said the 1982 Miller High Life Superbowl was the most-watched sports program for the July 25 weekend. "Over 17 million people watched the race on TV," Sleeper said.

"We are trying to syndicate ourselves, too. The events the networks don't pick up we'll film, edit, then sell to various local stations across the country," Sleeper said. National television, she indicated, is the foremost medium that can add legitimacy to arena racing.

But the question still remains: Can the sport absorb a 25-race season? The promoters say yes, and the riders, they claim, will go with the numbers. Stadiumcross has strong numbers, too, with more than 65,000 spectators at this year's Superbowl of Motocross, and 70,000 at Anaheim last February. The numbers do indeed favor the artificial courses, not the outdoor Nationals.

The prize money, however, doesn't correlate with crowd numbers. Mike Bell won the Last Superbowl, and took home approximately $3000 prize money (not counting contingencies and a factory bonus for the win), about what an outdoor National pays. As the AMA explains it, the Last Superbowl's 1982 payout scale reflected the 1981 doubleheader, in which the promoters lost money. Plus, according to Sleeper, the prize money formula was structured to help privateers, who generally finish behind the factory racers. As a gesture of thanks to the riders, Stadium Motorsports and race-sponsor Miller High Life Beer took $4400 from the 1982 Superbowl profits and added it to the November 6 San Diego race, another Goodwin event.

Ultimately, though, no one in stadiumcross owes anyone anything: The racing is top-notch, the stadiums offer panoramic views of the action, and the factory riders, at least, are making good money from their teams and sponsors. And stadiumcross has successfully drawn *outside* sponsors—Miller High Life Beer, Wrangler Wear, Coca-Cola and others have supported the racing through the years.

Meanwhile, Goodwin and company are preparing for the 1983 race, the Superbowl of Motocross, Part II. And when the date is confirmed, prepare for even more fireworks, drumrolls and Huffman-hype. It'll be the same show, just at a different theater. *—Dain Gingerelli* ●

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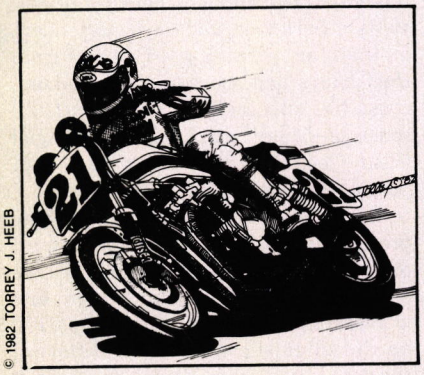
USED TIRES—CHEAP

Outstanding! The performance-tire test in the September issue was the best motorcycle accessory comparison ever. A test of this kind is so much more helpful than just descriptive listings of unsubstantiated manufacturers' claims. Your technique of "blind" testing, and the consistency of findings from the different riders, made the results even more powerful and believable.

After several pairs of tires on my GS1100E, I've come to the same conclusion as your testers—I'm doing some shopping for Pirellis. Do you know anyone interested in a pair of ContiTwins with less than 1000 miles on them?

Seth Asser
San Diego, California



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WHY NOT MY DREAMBIKE

I just finished reading the tire test and there's something that I don't understand. The test stated, "what better vehicle to test the world's best-handling hyperbike tire than the world's best-handling hyperbike." The reference was to Kawasaki's GPz1100. Yet in the May comparison test of the GPz and the GS1100E, the Superbowl of Hyperformance, you reached the conclusion that, "the Suzuki is the winner, clear and simple." So why didn't you use the Suzuki for the tire test?

I feel that you do good, fair tests and don't take sides in your evaluations. I still want to believe that the GS1100E is my dreambike, so tell me that I missed something as to why you picked the GPz for the tire test.

Mike Shuptar
League City, Texas

The hyperbike test concluded that the GS is a better all-around *motorcycle. With the tires, however, we were concerned less with all-aroundness than with the outer limits of handling, at which the GPz is superior—ed.*

THE PIMPLE BACKLASH

The Guest Editorial in the September issue by Mary Alice Kellogg really turned my stomach. Poor Petey! What did he do to deserve *that*? Is it really such a crime to have pimples? I hope that's not a sample of future Guest Editorials.

Carol Allen
Madison, Tennessee

MORE HELP FOR PETEY

I think I've figured out why Mary Alice Kellogg hates black leather. "Petey" probably was her secret lover all through high school and now refuses to see her anymore. Kellogg should know that leather is a superb skin saver, no matter what color it is, but I'll bet she doesn't even ride. She probably has zits, too.

Mike Rowland
Tulsa, Oklahoma

WE'RE WITH YOU, PETEY

Mary Alice Kellogg should be testing breakfast cereals instead of writing about motorcycles and leathers. Leather jackets always have been associated with motorcycles, and if Miss Kellogg doesn't realize this she has spent her life in a cave.

And as for her friends who ride but don't wear leather, that's their business. But plaid pants, striped shirts and white socks worn while riding a motorcycle are as wrong as tennis shoes with a tuxedo. Mary Alice has strange companions.

Personally, I think nothing looks better than a good, well-fitting set of leathers. They look sharp and show class. Kellogg just doesn't understand and probably never will. I hope that article isn't the opinion of CYCLE GUIDE.

Larry Skeens
Painesville, Ohio

ONE FOR MARY ALICE

The views and opinions on motorcycle advertising published in the September issue are "right on." Mary Alice Kellogg, may Good Karma always ride in your sidecar.

Mark Doblinger
Scottsdale, Arizona

Wait a minute. Are you, Skeens, Rowland and Allen all talking about the same thing?—ed.

DON'T FORGET ADVENTURE

I enjoy your magazine, with one exception—you seem to appreciate and constantly expect ever more speed, complexity, smoothness and quietness. But unfortunately, with these high-tech bikes you lose the sense of adventure or "roughing it"; these machines have become unnecessarily fast, easy and soft. You don't seem to realize that a lot of people, like myself, ride one of Harley's FLH models for just this reason.

While there is no standard measurement for owner satisfaction from a bike's performance, I don't think there is any need for performance beyond what is required. In fact, Harley's choice not to pursue this trend to such an extreme may have given it an edge in owner serviceability, excitement at legal speeds and resale value.

Don't get me wrong, I wouldn't want to see the Japanese change their innovative approach, and I *would* welcome some new models from Harley, but the FLH remains as practical and timely as ever. And it's likely to stay that way.

John R. Lewis
Killeen, Texas

SETTING PRIORITIES

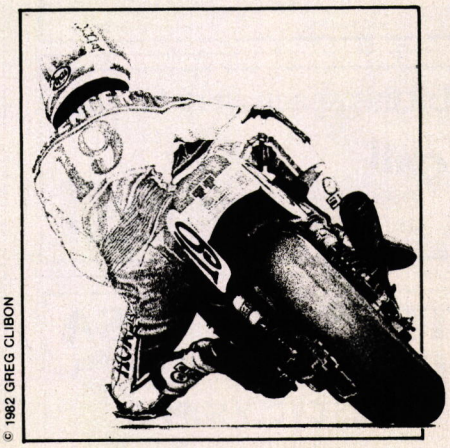
A motorcycle is not a practical means of transportation and because of this, motorcycle selection tends to evoke emotional responses. It's this response that most accurately determines a cycle/rider compatibility. And with that in mind, God help anyone who buys a bike solely on the basis on your test results. (H-D FLH, August, '82).

You people simply cannot separate tech-speak from cycle-speak. Who cares if Harley-Davidson hasn't changed its double-thumper since 1949? Your problem is an obvious frustration with the knowledge that thousands of motorcycle purchasers yearly reject the computerized clones of Japan and put their dollars on a machine that emphasizes gut-appeal over tech-appeal.

I would suggest that you make a U-turn to reality and realize that motorcycles are intensely personal, and biking is not all shaft-drives and turbos.

James H. Selway
York, Pennsylvania

Speaking of U-turns, why don't you go back and reread the test. You might find out that we agree with you more than you think—ed.



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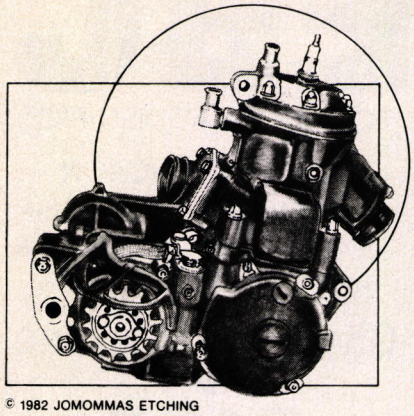

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A CLASSIC PUTDOWN

Larry Works says there is no reason on earth to justify the existence of the Harley FLH Classic. Dean, Lawson and Kress find it a "relic, a museum piece and not appealing in the least." I know your kind—you probably promote helmet laws and want to ban handguns. I think you're all downright un-American.

Everyone should ride what they like, and most of the guys out there on Japanese bikes wish they could afford Harleys. I know. They tell me.

A.E. Burrell
Studio City, California

P.S. I have a $25 bet that you won't print this.

Read the answer to Selway—it applies to you, too.

P.S. Reach for your wallet—ed.

THE EASY-PAY PLAN

Larry Works' editorial in the September issue hit dead-center with me. After a several-year riding layoff, I got the urge to climb back on a motorcycle. With all the road tests memorized, all the specs of current 750s written on a little pad, I headed out to the dealers.

The F gleamed, the GS glistened, the KZ shined and the XJ sparkled. They all looked good, sounded great and from what I read, handled better than I rode. But what kept me off all of them wasn't European-brand loyalty or the screaming of a spouse; it simply was that the best financing I could find (among loan officers who would even *consider* a bike) involved a minimum 25 percent cash down and a maximum of two years to pay the balance.

I wonder how many people would make the move to a new machine, or even a first one, if only the financing were available. As it was, I ended up with a nice '75 Honda 400F—it wasn't the 750 I lusted for, but I could swing the payments.

Al Jensen
Cupertino, California

You're not alone, Jensen, and manufacturers are going to have to wake up to that—ed. ●

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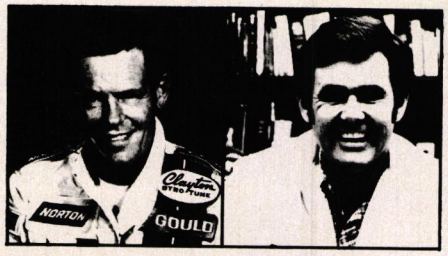

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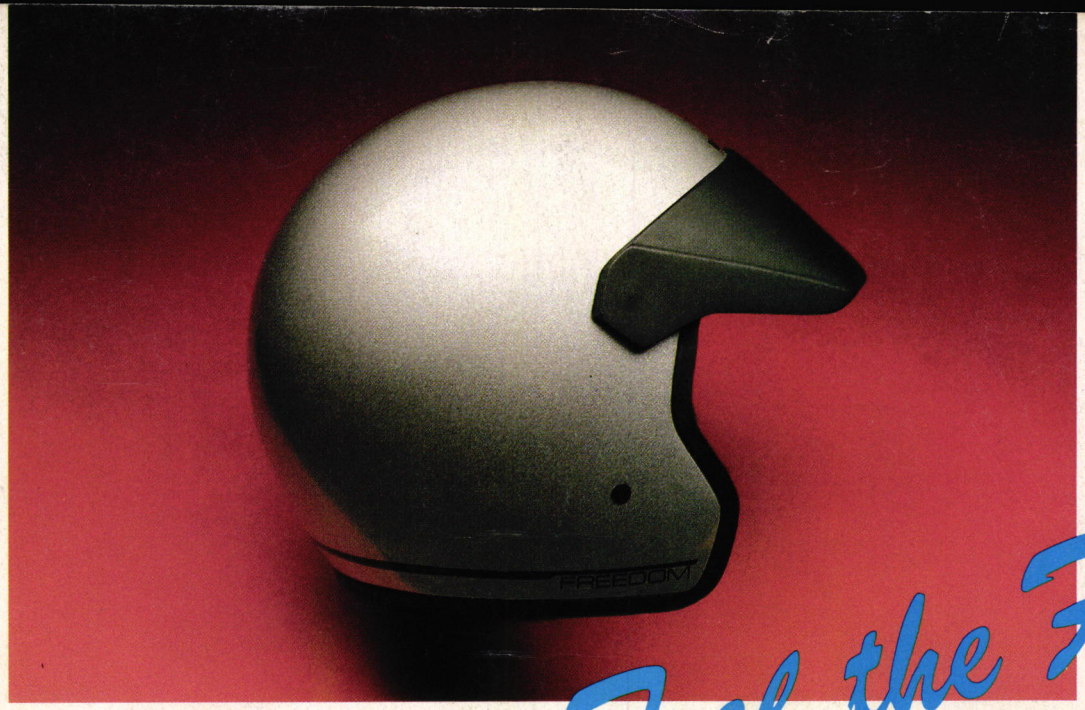

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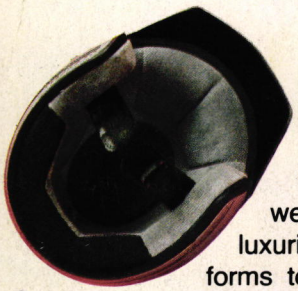

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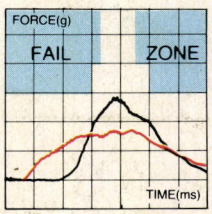
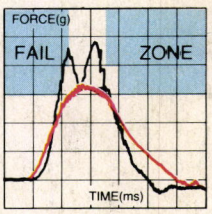


Maximum force transmitted to the head:
Vetterlite: 82g
Competition: 138g



IMPACT FELT BY HEAD 5" FLAT DOME TYPICAL AMBIENT TEST

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